OM

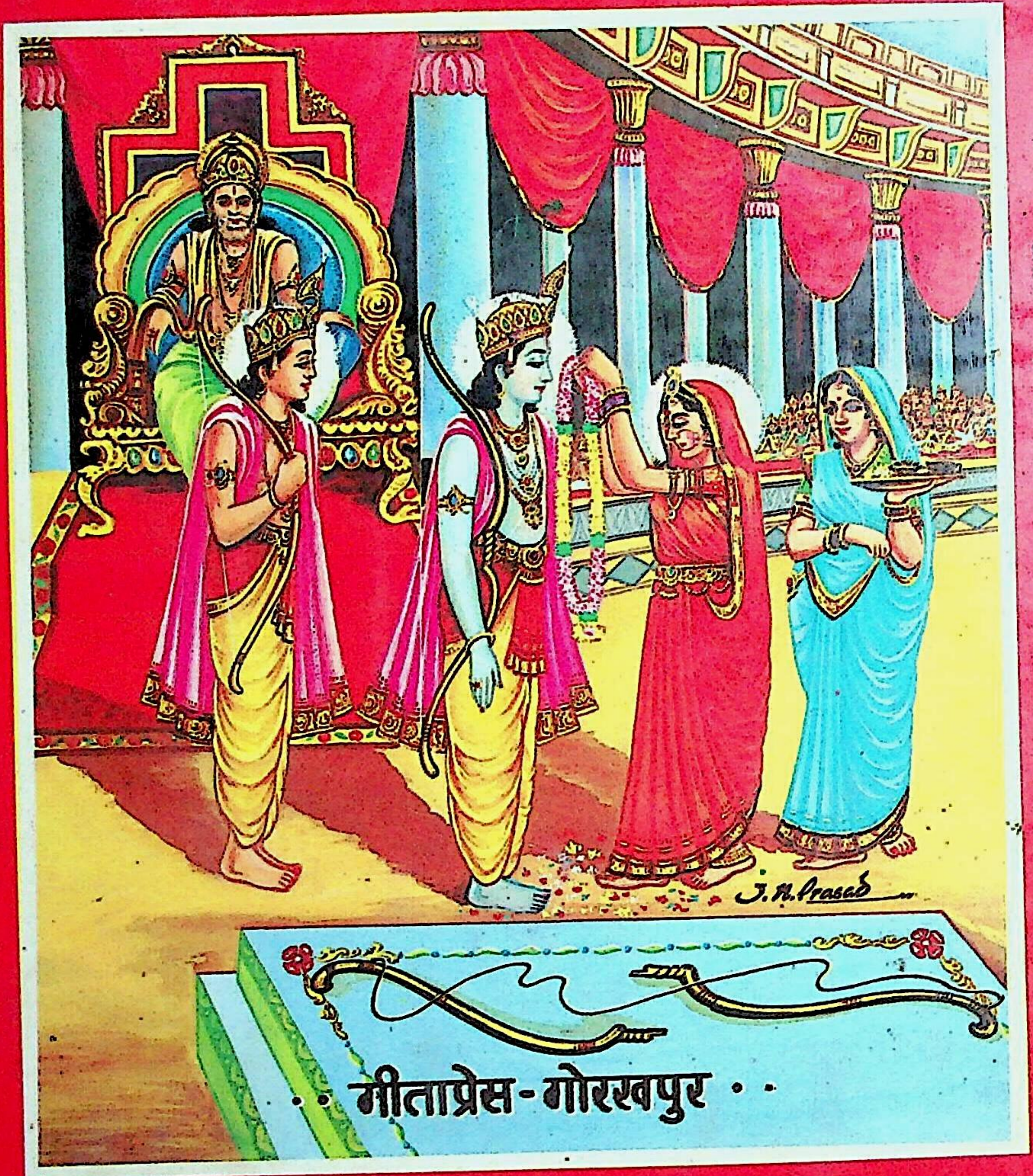
452

Śrīmad Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa

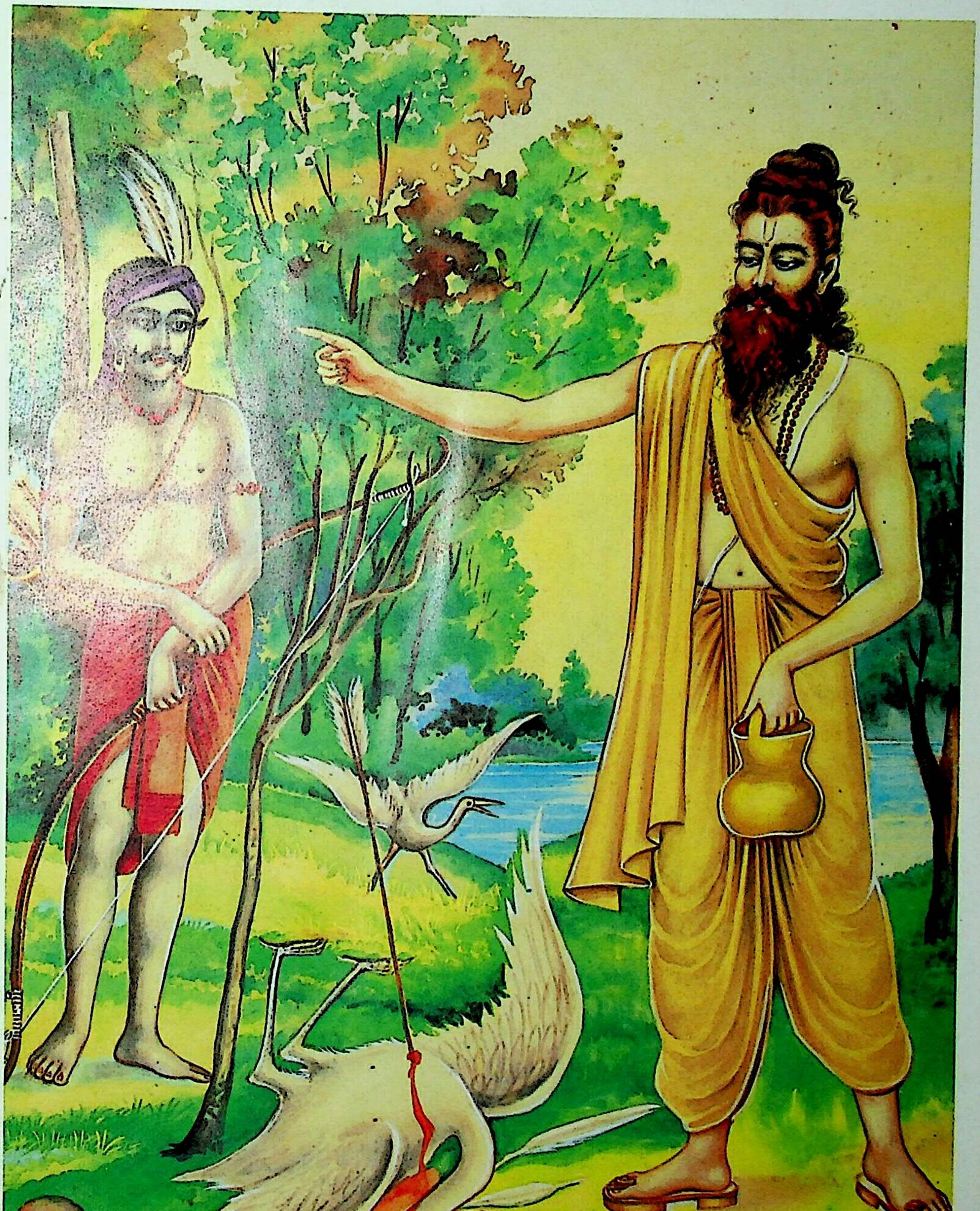
(With Sanskrit text and English translation)

Part—I

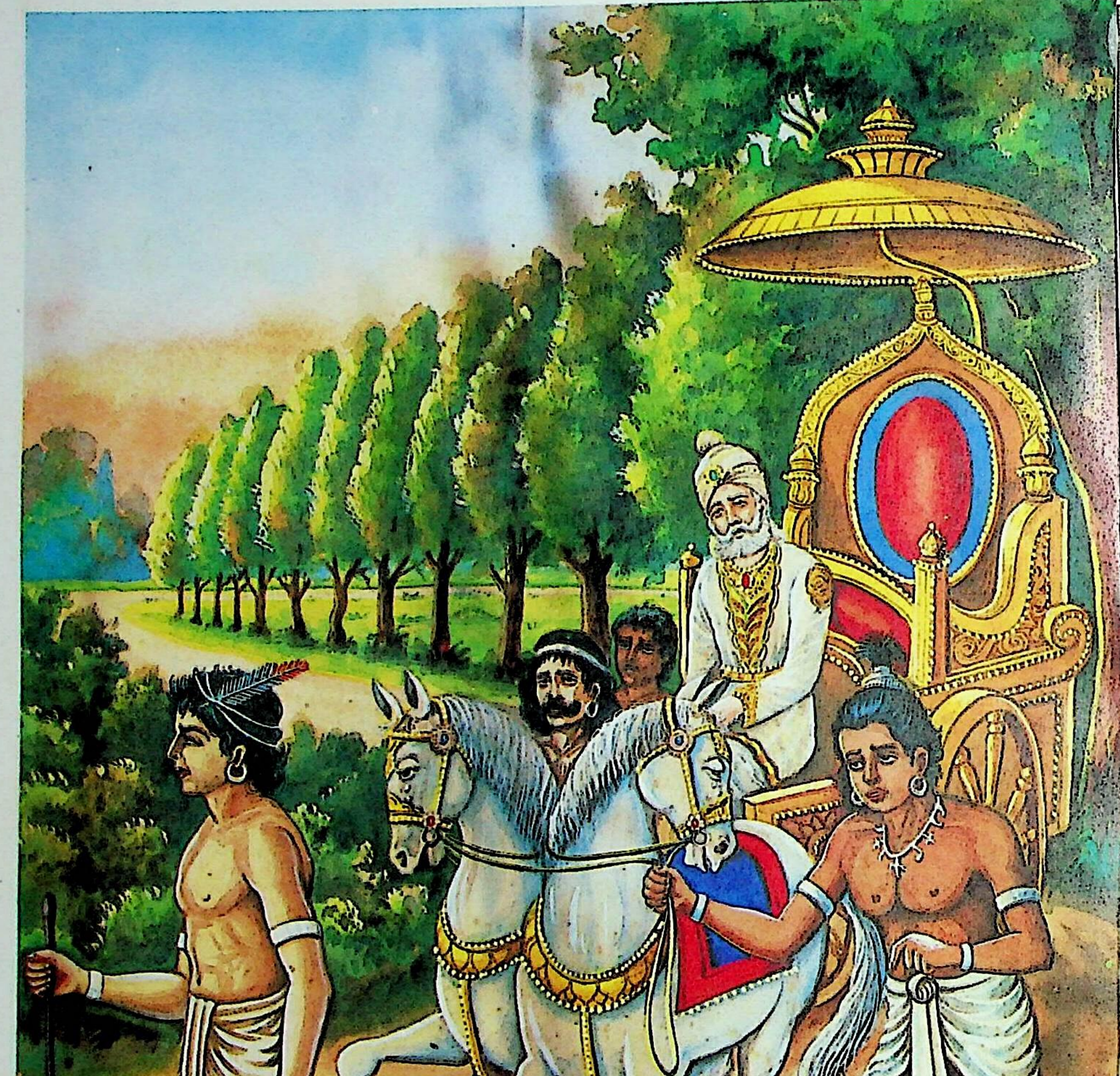
[Bāla-Kāṇḍa and Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa]


J. N. Prasad
गीताप्रेस-गोरखपुर

Gita Press, Gorakhpur India



Vālmīki's Grief (the Seed of the Rāmāyaṇa)



Sumantra Returning to Ayodhyā

0452

OṀ

Śrīmad Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa

(With Sanskrit Text and English Translation)

Part—I

[Bāla-Kāṇḍa and Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa]

Gita Press, Gorakhpur, India

Published by Govind Bhavan Karyalaya Gita Press, Gorakhpur, India

First Three Editions	1969—1992	10,000	Copies
Fourth Edition	1995	4,000	Copies
	Total	14,000	Copies

Price : Rs. 80.00

Printed at Gita Press, Gorakhpur—273005, India

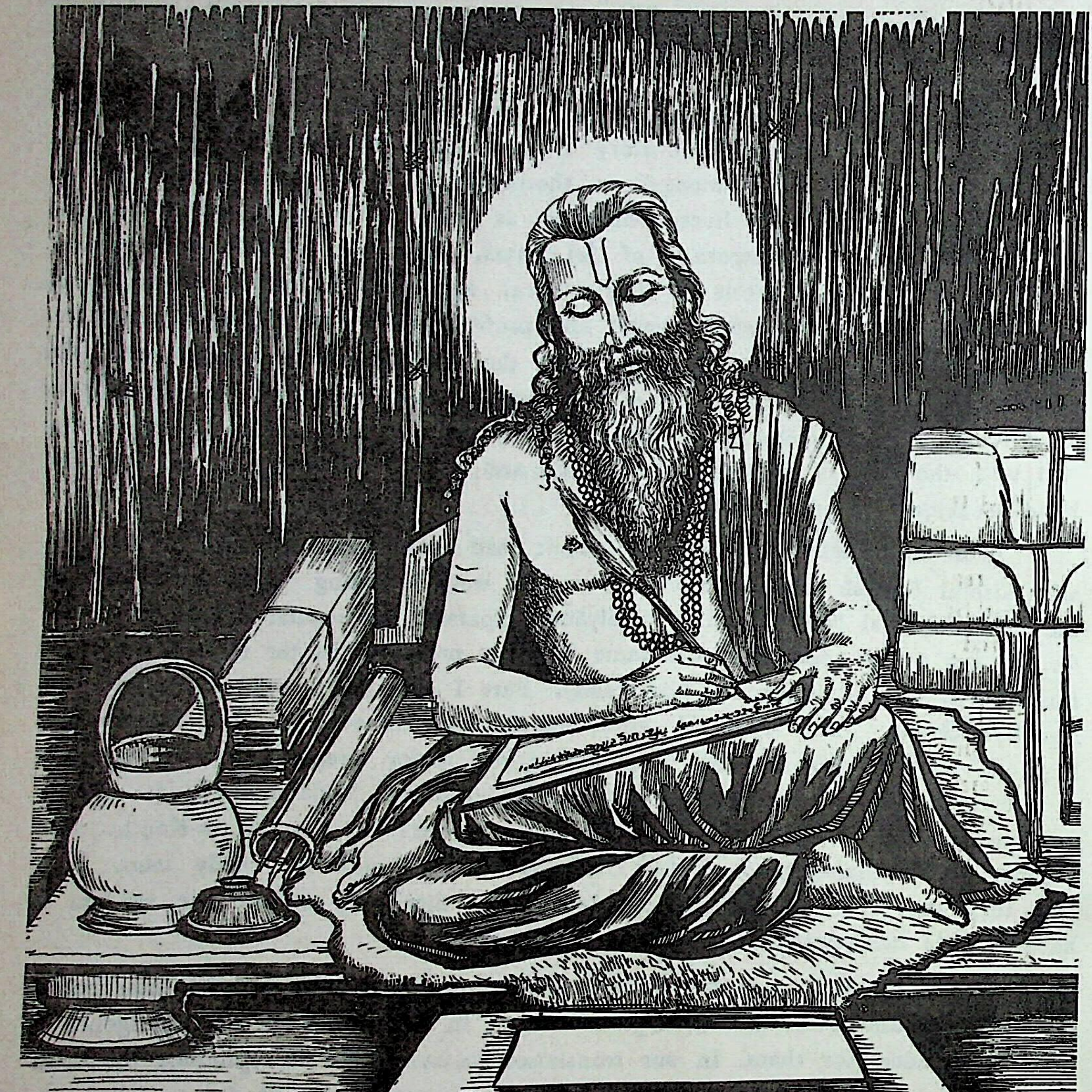
Telephone : 334721

Publisher's Note

The Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa is read all over India with great reverence and love as it contains the most authentic story of Lord Śrī Rāma, one of the two most popular Avatars who lived amongst us thousands of years ago but have left an indelible impression on our lives, which is as fresh today as it was during the time of Vālmīki, a contemporary of Śrī Rāma. It is one of the world's most remarkable classics and excels all in its moral appeal. It is full of lessons for all and deserves to be read with interest and profit by all lovers of healthy literature. It is noted for its poetic excellences and is the oldest specimen of epic poetry. An authentic and readable translation of this world-renowned book was published in Hindi, the national language of India, many years ago after critically editing the text with the help of different recensions, and is very widely read all over the Hindi-speaking and adjacent areas.

For the benefit of those who cannot read and understand Hindi an accurate and faithful English translation of this sacred work is being published serially in the form of Special Numbers of the 'Kalyāṇa-Kalpataru', our popular English magazine, for the last many years, and the same is being presented in the form of a book in three parts, two of which are now ready. Part I contains the Bālakāṇḍa and the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa, while Part II embodies the next three books, *viz*, the Araṇya, Kiṣkindhā and Sundara Kāṇḍas. Part III is still under preparation and may take a little more time to be ready. The translation of the Yuddha-Kāṇḍa is already published in the Kalyāṇa-Kalpataru, so also a part of the Uttara-Kāṇḍa. God willing, the remaining part of the Uttara-Kāṇḍa will also be ready soon. It is only then that Part III will be complete. We, therefore, request our readers to have a little more patience and wait for Part III.

Although great care has been taken in translating and printing these books, typographical and other errors may have crept in and we crave the indulgence of our kind readers for them. In our translation we have tried to reproduce the meaning of the original as best as possible so as to enable the reader to follow the text word by word, and made it as close as possible, preserving even the grammatical peculiarities of the original and translating even indeclinables like च, खलु, वै, हि, ह, तु and so on, which cannot be called redundant in the work of a Ṛṣi. We leave it to our learned readers, who are conversant with both the languages, to judge how far we have done justice to the work which has fallen on our weak shoulders. In the end we dedicate our humble effort to the Almighty Lord Śrī Rāma, who has sustained us throughout in His abundant grace and enabled us to bring out these volumes.



Maharṣi Vālmīki

Procedure of reading the full Valmiki-Ramayana in nine days

Devotees have been advised to undertake a full nine-day reading of Śrīmad Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa from the 5th to the 13th of the bright half of any of the three months, Chaitra, Māgha and Kārtika[1] of the Hindu calendar. The Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa should be read at some holy spot or place of pilgrimage, in a temple or at one's own residence in the presence of an image of Lord Viṣṇu or the sacred Śālagrāma stone (which is regarded as a symbol of Lord Viṣṇu) and the sacred basil plant. The ground on which the Rāmāyaṇa is to be read should as far as possible be purified by being cleared, swept clean and plastered with cowdung etc. and also decorated with flags and buntings and covered with a canopy. The pavilion under which the reading is to take place should be sixteen square cubits in area and in the centre of it should be raised an altar with a figure of Sarvatobhadra formed on it. There should be other altars, sacrificial pits and altars of sand too under the pavilion. In the south-western portion of the pavilion should be placed a seat for the reader and another for the principal hearer in front of the former. A seat for the book should also be placed in front of the reader. Arrangements should be made for seating the other hearers too. The seat for the reader should be higher than that intended for the principal hearer, while the seat for the book should be higher even than that for the reader.[2]

After going through the expiatory rites and finishing one's daily devotions an image of Śrī Rāma should be installed or the presence of Śrī Sītā-Rāma along with Their *entourage*, *viz*, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata, Śatrughna, Hanumān and others should be mentally invoked on the book itself. Then a water-pot endowed with all accessories such as the leaves of five holy trees, *viz*, the mango, the peepul (the Indian fig-tree), the banyan tree, the Parkaṭa and the Udumbara tree, should be installed as a symbol of various deities including Varuṇa (the god of water). And after reading benedictory verses and offering worship to Lord Gaṇeśa, Vaṭuka Bhairava[3], Kṣetrapāla (a spirit believed to preside over fields), the Yoginīs[4], the sixteen Mātṛkās or divine mothers[5], the Navagrahas[6], the sacred Tulasī

---

[1] चैत्रे माघे कार्तिके च सिते पक्षे च वाचयेत् ।
नवाहं सुमहापुण्यं श्रोतव्यं च प्रयत्नतः ॥
पञ्चम्या दिनमारभ्य रामायणकथामृतम् ।
नवाहश्रवणेनैव सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥
(रामसेवाग्रन्थ)

[2] श्रोतृभ्यश्च तथा वक्तुर्व्यासाद् ग्रन्थस्य चोच्चता ।
(Ibid)

[3] An attendant of Lord Śiva credited with the form of a lad and devoted to His divine Consort (Pārvatī).

[4] Semi-divine females endowed with supernatural powers created by Goddess Durgā and attending on Her or on Lord Śiva.

[5] The sixteen divine mothers are :—Gaurī, Padmā, Sachī, Medhā, Sāvitrī, Vijayā, Jayā, Devasenā, Swadhā, Swāhā, Śānti, Puṣṭi, Dhṛti, Tuṣṭi, Ātmadevatā and Kuladevatā.

[6] The deities presiding over the nine principal heavenly bodies believed to control the destinies of living beings, *viz*, the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rāhu and Ketu.

(basil) plant, the five Lokapālas[7] (deities presiding over the world), the ten Dikpālas[8] (deities presiding over the ten directions), and so on, and going through the rite known as Nāndīśrāddha (in which worship is offered to a class of manes known by the name of Nāndīmukha), worship should be offered to Lord Śrī Rāma with His divine *entourage*.

After mentioning the time and place of the reading, as well as one's Gotra (family name) and name, the following Sankalpa (or expression of one's mental resolve) should be read before commencing the Pūjā mentioned above :—

ॐ भूर्भुवः स्वरोम् । ममोपात्तदुरितक्षयपूर्वकं श्रीसीतारामप्रीत्यर्थं श्रीसीतालक्ष्मणभरतशत्रुघ्नहनुमत्समेतश्रीरामचन्द्रप्रसादसिद्ध्यर्थं श्रीरामचन्द्रप्रसादेन सर्वाभीष्टसिद्ध्यर्थं च श्रीरामचन्द्रपूजनमहं करिष्ये, श्रीवाल्मीकीयरामायणस्य पारायणं च करिष्ये, तदङ्गभूतं कलशस्थापनं स्वस्त्ययनपाठं गणपतिपूजनं वटुकक्षेत्रपालयोगिनीमातृकानवग्रहतुलसीलोकपालदिक्पालादिपूजनं चाहं करिष्ये ।

"For winning the pleasure of Śrī Sītā-Rāma through the eradication of (all the) sins incurred by me and securing the grace of Lord Śrī Rāmachandra accompanied by Śrī Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata, Śatrughna and Hanumān, and for achieving all my desired objects through Their grace I shall offer worship to Śrī Rāmachandra and read the whole of Śrīmad Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa and, as something auxiliary to it, instal a water-pot, recite benedictory verses, offer worship to Lord Gaṇeśa, Vaṭuka Bhairava, Kṣetrapāla, the Yoginīs, the Mātṛkās, the Navagrahas, the Tulasī plant, the Lokapālas, Dikpālas and so on."

While commencing the worship salutations should be offered to the Lord under the following sixteen names :—

ॐ अच्युताय नमः, ॐ अनन्ताय नमः, ॐ गोविन्दाय नमः, ॐ नारायणाय नमः, ॐ मधुसूदनाय नमः, ॐ हृषीकेशाय नमः, ॐ माधवाय नमः, ॐ त्रिविक्रमाय नमः, ॐ दामोदराय नमः, ॐ मुकुन्दाय नमः, ॐ वामनाय नमः, ॐ पद्मनाभाय नमः, ॐ केशवाय नमः, ॐ विष्णवे नमः, ॐ श्रीधराय नमः, ॐ श्रीसीतारामाभ्यां नमः ।

The Lord should first of all be visualized after uttering the formula : श्रीसीतालक्ष्मणभरतशत्रुघ्नहनुमत्समेतं श्रीरामचन्द्रं ध्यायामि—

Their presence should next be invoked after uttering the formula : श्रीसीतालक्ष्मणभरतशत्रुघ्नहनुमत्समेतं श्रीरामचन्द्रं आवाहयामि ।

A seat, water to wash their feet and hands with, water for bath, water to rinse their mouths with, raiment, a sacred thread and ornaments, sandal-paste mixed with saffron and camphor, grains of rice (for decorating the forehead with), a wreath, of flowers for adorning the neck with, incense to perfume the air, light, offerings of food and fruits, betel leaves seasoned with catechu, lime, areca-nuts, cardamom seeds etc., waving of lights by burning camphor, a canopy, a pair of whisks flowers placed in the hollow of one's joined palms and other royal paraphernalia, circumambulation from left to right and salutations respectively should be offered to Śrī Rāma and His *entourage* after uttering the following formulas :—

---

[7] The five Lokapālas are :—Lord Gaṇeśa, Goddess Durgā, Vāyu or the wind-god, Dyu or the deity presiding over the heavens and the Aświnis or the twin-gods who are recognized as physicians to the gods.

[8] The ten Dikpālas are :—Indra, Yama, Varuṇa and Kubera presiding over the eastern, southern, western and northern quarters respectively, Agni (the god of fire), the ogre Nirṛti, Vāyu (the wind-god) and Īśāna presiding over the four intermediate points, Brahmā presiding over the upper region and Śeṣa or the serpent-god presiding over the lower region.

श्रीसीतालक्ष्मणभरतशत्रुघ्नहनुमत्समेताय श्रीरामचन्द्राय नमः—रत्नसिंहासनं समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ पाद्यं समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ अर्घ्यं समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ स्नानीयं समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ आचमनीयं समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ वस्त्रं समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ यज्ञोपवीताभरणं समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ गन्धान् समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ अक्षतान् समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ पुष्पाणि समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ धूपमाघ्रापयामि ।
„ „ „ दीपं दर्शयामि ।
„ „ „ नैवेद्यं फलानि च समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ ताम्बूलं समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ कर्पूरनीराजनं समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ छत्रचामरादि समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ पुष्पाञ्जलिं समर्पयामि ।
„ „ „ प्रदक्षिणानमस्कारान् समर्पयामि ।

Worship should then be offered to the copy of Śrīmad Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa with sandal-paste, flowers as well as a garland, incense, light and food respectively after uttering the following verses :—

ॐ सदा श्रवणमात्रेण पापिनां सद्गतिप्रदे ।
शुभे रामकथे तुभ्यं गन्धमद्य समर्पये ॥
—इति गन्धं समर्पयामि ।

"I offer you sandal-paste today, O Story of Śrī Rāma, capable (as you are) of bestowing a happy futurity even on sinners !"

ॐ बालादिसप्तकाण्डेन सर्वलोकसुखप्रद ।
रामायण महोदार पुष्पं तेऽद्य समर्पये ॥
—इति पुष्पाणि पुष्पमालां च समर्पयामि ।

"I offer you flowers (as well as a garland), O munificent Rāmāyaṇa, conferring (as you do) happiness on all men by your seven Kāṇḍas (divisions), the Bālakāṇḍa etc, !"

ॐ यस्यैकश्लोकपाठस्य फलं सर्वफलाधिकम् ।
तस्मै रामायणायाद्य दशाङ्गं धूपमर्पये ॥
—इति धूपमाघ्रापयामि ।

"I offer incense constituted of ten ingredients today to the celebrated Rāmāyaṇa, the reward of reading even a single verse of which surpasses all (other) rewards."

ॐ यस्य लोके प्रणेतारो वाल्मीक्यादिमहर्षयः ।
तस्मै रामचरित्राय घृतदीपं समर्पये ॥
—इति दीपं दर्शयामि ।

"I offer light fed with ghee to the celebrated story of Śrī Rāma, which has been written by eminent Ṛṣis like Vālmīki."

ॐ श्रूयते ब्रह्मणो लोके शतकोटिप्रविस्तरम् ।
रूपं रामायणस्यास्य तस्मै नैवेद्यमर्पये ॥
—इति नैवेद्यं समर्पयामि ।

"The bulk of this (very) Rāmāyaṇa is heard of as extending to a hundred crore couplets in Brahmaloka (the realm of Brahmā, the creator). I offer it food."

At the end of the Pūjā lights should be waved round the book by burning camphor and, after going clockwise round it, flowers placed in the hollow of one's joined palms should be offered to it. Then, falling prostrate before the book, salutation should be offered to it by reading the following couplets:—

वाल्मीकिगिरिसम्भूता रामसागरगामिनी ।
पुनाति भुवनं पुण्या रामायणमहानदी ॥
श्लोकसारसमाकीर्णं सर्गकल्लोलसंकुलम् ।
काण्डग्राहमहामीनं वन्दे रामायणार्णवम् ॥

"The great and holy river in the form of the Rāmāyaṇa, which has descended from the mountain in the form of Sage Vālmīki and flows to the ocean embodied as Śrī Rāma, purifies the world (with its contact). I bow down to the ocean in the form of the Rāmāyaṇa, which has verses for its water, cantos for its billows and the Kāṇḍas or books for its alligators and large fish."

After offering worship to gods and the Brahmans the following Nyāsas should be gone through. According to the work known by the name of 'Anuṣṭhāna-Prakāśa', if one is unable to read the entire Rāmāyaṇa, one may read any of the Kāṇḍas according to the desire by which one is actuated. For example, it lays down that a man seeking a son should read the Bālakāṇḍa and a seeker of wealth should read the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa. Similarly one seeking to recover a lost kingdom should read the Kiṣkindhā-Kāṇḍa, people actuated by all sorts of desires are called upon to read the Sundarakāṇḍa, while a man seeking to exterminate his foes should read the Yuddha-Kāṇḍa. According to the Bṛhaddharma-Purāṇa, the Rāmāyaṇa can be read from other interested motives too. A reference to the view of that Purāṇa as well as to the modes of Nyāsa enjoined in it will be made later on.

ॐ अस्य श्रीवाल्मीकिरामायणमहामन्त्रस्य भगवान् वाल्मीकिर्ऋषिः । अनुष्टुप् छन्दः । श्रीरामः परमात्मा देवता । अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्य इति बीजम् । अङ्गुल्यग्रेण तान् हन्यामिति शक्तिः । एतदस्त्रबलं दिव्यमिति कीलकम् । भगवान्नारायणो देव इति तत्त्वम् । धर्मात्मा सत्यसंधश्चेत्यस्त्रम् । पुरुषार्थचतुष्टयसिद्ध्यर्थे पाठे विनियोगः ।

ॐ श्रीं रां आपदामपहर्तारमित्यङ्गुष्ठाभ्यां नमः ।

ॐ ह्रीं रीं दातारमिति तर्जनीभ्यां नमः । ॐ रों रूं सर्वसम्पदामिति मध्यमाभ्यां नमः ।

ॐ श्रीं रैं लोकाभिराममित्यनामिकाभ्यां नमः । ॐ श्रीं रौं श्रीराममिति कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः ।

ॐ रौं रः भूयो भूयो नमाम्यहमिति करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः ।

Hṛdayādi-Nyāsa should be similarly gone through while uttering the same Mantras as above.

The following couplet should then be read while taking one's right hand round one's head clockwise by way of Digbandha (ensuring safety in all directions):—

ब्रह्मा स्वयम्भूर्भगवान् देवाश्चैव तपस्विनः ।
सिद्धिं दिशन्तु मे सर्वे देवाः सर्षिगणास्त्विह ॥

—इति दिग्बन्धः ।

One should then meditate on Śrī Rāma and His *entourage* seated on a lotus according to the following verse:—

वामे भूमिसुता पुरस्तु हनुमान् पश्चात् सुमित्रासुतः
शत्रुघ्नो भरतश्च पार्श्वदलयोर्वाय्वादिकोणेषु च ।

सुग्रीवश्च विभीषणश्च युवराट् तारासुतो जाम्बवान्
मध्ये नीलसरोजकोमलरुचिं रामं भजे श्यामलम् ॥

* * *

आपदामपहर्तारं दातारं सर्वसम्पदाम् ।
लोकाभिरामं श्रीरामं भूयो भूयो नमाम्यहम् ॥

"Sītā (Daughter of Goddess Earth) is seated to the left (of Śrī Rāma), Hanumān in front, Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) at the back, Śatrughna and Bharata on the petals on the two sides (to the left and right), Sugrīva, Vibhīṣaṇa, Crown prince Angada (son of Tārā) and Jāmbavān at the four intermediate points (*viz*, north-west, north-east, south-east and south-west) respectively; while in the centre (of the lotus) I worship Śrī Rāma of a cerulean hue, possessing the soft lustre of a blue lotus."

The following couplet is used as a Sampuṭa-Mantra and repeated at the beginning as well as at the end of every single verse of the Rāmāyaṇa for achieving all one's desired ends :—

आपदामपहर्तारं दातारं सर्वसम्पदाम् ।
लोकाभिरामं श्रीरामं भूयो भूयो नमाम्यहम् ॥

"I salute again and again Śrī Rāma, the Delight of the whole world, the Reliever of sufferings and the Bestower of all riches."

After uttering the following Mangalācharaṇa[9] (prayers by way of an auspicious introduction for the attainment of success) one should start reading the Rāmāyaṇa :—

MEDITATION ON LORD GAṆEŚA

शुक्लाम्बरधरं देवं शशिवर्णं चतुर्भुजम् ।
प्रसन्नवदनं ध्यायेत् सर्वविघ्नोपशान्तये ॥ १ ॥
वागीशाद्याः सुमनसः सर्वार्थानामुपक्रमे ।
यं नत्वा कृतकृत्याः स्युस्तं नमामि गजाननम् ॥ २ ॥

"In order to put an end to all obstacles one should meditate on Lord Gaṇeśa, who is clad in white robes, is clothed with a moon-like splendour, is endowed with four arms and (always) wears a cheerful aspect. I bow down to Lord Gaṇeśa (adorned with the head of an elephant), by saluting whom at the beginning of every undertaking gods headed by Brahmā (the lord of Goddess Saraswatī) got accomplished of purpose."

SALUTATIONS TO ONE'S PRECEPTOR

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुर्गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।
गुरुः साक्षात् परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥
अखण्डमण्डलाकारं व्याप्तं येन चराचरम् ।
तत्पदं दर्शितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥

"The preceptor is Brahmā (the creator); the preceptor is Lord Viṣṇu (the Protector of the universe) and the preceptor is

---

[9] According to the Bṛhaddharma-Purāṇa the following 'Kavacha' (the reading of which serves as a protective armour against all evils) should be read before the Mangalācharaṇa. The Kavacha must be read at least on the first day if not every day :—

ॐ नमोऽष्टादशतत्त्वरूपाय रामायणाय महामन्त्रस्वरूपाय । मा निषादेति मूलं शिरोऽवतु । अनुक्रमणिकाबीजं मुखमवतु । ऋष्यश्रृङ्गोपाख्यानं ऋषिः जिह्वामवतु । जानकीलाभोऽनुष्टुपछन्दोऽवतु गलम् । केकय्याज्ञा देवता हृदयमवतु । सीतालक्ष्मणानुगमनश्रीरामहर्षाः प्रमाणं जठरमवतु । भगवद्भक्तिः शक्तिरवतु मे मध्यम् । शक्तिमान् धर्मो मुनीनां पालनं ममोरू रक्षतु । मारीचवचनं प्रतिपालनमवतु पादौ । सुग्रीवमैत्रमर्थोऽवतु स्तनौ । निर्णयो हनुमच्चेष्टावतु बाहू । कर्ता सम्पातिपक्षोद्गमोऽवतु स्कन्धौ । प्रयोजनं विभीषणराज्यं ग्रीवां ममावतु । रावणवधः स्वरूपमवतु कर्णौ । सीतोद्धारो लक्ष्मणमवतु नासिके । अमोघस्तवसंस्तवोऽवतु जीवात्मानम् । नयः काललक्ष्मणसंवादोऽवतु नाभिम् । आचरणीयं श्रीरामादिधर्मं सर्वाङ्गं ममावतु । इति रामायणकवचम् ।

(बृहद्धर्मपुराणम्, पूर्वखण्डम्, २५ वाँ अध्याय)

Lord Śiva (the supreme Lord). The preceptor is the Supreme Brahma personified. Hail to the aforesaid Guru ! Hail to the aforesaid preceptor, by whom that ultimate end has been revealed to me by which stands pervaded the entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile creation and extending in the form of an indivisible sphere."

MEDITATION ON SARASWATĪ

दोर्भिर्युक्ता चतुर्भिः स्फटिकमणिमयीमक्षमालां दधाना
हस्तेनैकेन पद्मं सितमपि च शुकं पुस्तकं चापरेण ।
भासा कुन्देन्दुशङ्खस्फटिकमणिनिभा भासमानासमाना
सा मे वाग्देवतेयं निवसतु वदने सर्वदा सुप्रसन्ना ॥

"May that goddess of speech abide at all times, highly pleased, in my organ of speech, who, endowed (as she is) with four arms, holds in one a rosary of Rudrākṣa-like beads made of crystal, a white lotus in another, a parrot in the third and a book in the fourth, who resembles (in hue) a Kúnda (jasmine) flower, the moon, the conch and crystal, shines with splendour and is without parallel (in beauty and grace)."

SALUTATIONS TO SAGE VĀLMĪKI

कूजन्तं राम रामेति मधुरं मधुराक्षरम् ।
आरुह्य कविताशाखां वन्दे वाल्मीकिकोकिलम् ॥
यः पिबन् सततं रामचरितामृतसागरम् ।
अतृप्तस्तं मुनिं वन्दे प्राचेतसमकल्मषम् ॥

"I salute Sage Vālmīki, conceived (by the poets) as a cuckoo melodiously singing the sweet syllables 'Rāma ! Rāma !!' while perched on a bough of the tree of poetry. I bow to the sinless Sage Vālmīki (son of Varuṇa, the god presiding over water), who, though incessantly drinking of the ocean of nectar in the shape of Śrī Rāma's narrative, remains unsated."

SALUTATIONS TO HANUMĀN

गोष्पदीकृतवारीशं मशकीकृतराक्षसम् ।
रामायणमहामालारत्नं वन्देऽनिलात्मजम् ॥
अञ्जनानन्दनं वीरं जानकीशोकनाशनम् ।
कपीशमक्षहन्तारं वन्दे लङ्काभयंकरम् ।
उल्लङ्घ्य सिन्धोः सलिलं सलीलं
यः शोकवह्निं जनकात्मजायाः ।
आदाय तेनैव ददाह लङ्कां
नमामि तं प्राञ्जलिराञ्जनेयम् ॥
आञ्जनेयमतिपाटलाननं काञ्चनाद्रिकमनीयविग्रहम् ।
पारिजाततरुमूलवासिनं भावयामि पवमाननन्दनम् ॥
यत्र यत्र रघुनाथकीर्तनं तत्र तत्र कृतमस्तकाञ्जलिम् ।
बाष्पवारिपरिपूर्णलोचनं मारुतिं नमत राक्षसान्तकम् ॥
मनोजवं मारुततुल्यवेगं
जितेन्द्रियं बुद्धिमतां वरिष्ठम् ।
वातात्मजं वानरयूथमुख्यं
श्रीरामदूतं शिरसा नमामि ॥

"I salute Hanumān (son of the wind-god), who sprang across the sea as though it were an impression made by the hoof of a cow, (nay) who crushed the ogres (of Lankā) as though they were (so many) mosquitoes and who is a jewel (as it were) adorning the great necklace of (the story of) the Rāmāyaṇa. I bow down to the heroic Hanumān (a ruler of monkeys), the delight of Añjanā (his mother), who dispelled the grief of Sītā (Janaka's Daughter), made short work of Akṣa (son of Rāvaṇa, the demon king of Lankā) and proved a source of terror to Lankā. I bow down with joined palms to the celebrated Hanumān (son of Añjanā), who, having leapt across the water of the sea (parting the land of Bhāratavarṣa from Lankā, which is now identified with the Laccadive Islands) as a matter of sport and, picking up the fire of grief of Sītā (Janaka's Daughter) burnt Lankā with that very fire. I contemplate on the son of Añjanā, the delight of the wind-god, who has a bloodred-face, is endowed with a personality charming as a mountain of gold and who has taken up his abode at the foot of a Pārijāta tree (one of the five kinds of celestial tree credited with the virtue of granting one's desire). Bow to Hanumān (son of the wind-god), the destroyer of ogres, who is present with his palms joined above his head and with his eyes flooded with tears (of joy) wherever the names and praises of the Lord of the Raghus are being sung. I bow my head to Hanumān (son of the wind-god), a leader of the army of monkeys and the foremost of those endowed with intelligence, who is swift as thought, (nay) who equals the wind-god in speed and has mastered his senses, and who played the role of an envoy of Śrī Rāma (in delivering His message to Sītā and ascertaining the strength of Rāvaṇa, who had stolen Her away)."

MEDITAION ON ŚRĪ RĀMA AND HIS *ENTOURAGE*

वैदेहीसहितं सुरद्रुमतले हैमे महामण्डपे
मध्येपुष्पकमासने मणिमये वीरासने संस्थितम् ।
अग्रे वाचयति प्रभञ्जनसुते तत्त्वं मुनिभ्यः परं
व्याख्यातं भरतादिभिः परिवृतं रामं भजे श्यामलम् ॥
वामे भूमिसुता पुरस्तु हनुमान् पश्चात् सुमित्रासुतः
शत्रुघ्नो भरतश्च पार्श्वदलयोर्वाय्वादिकोणेषु च ।
सुग्रीवश्च विभीषणश्च युवराट् तारासुतो जाम्बवान्
मध्ये नीलसरोजकोमलरुचिं रामं भजे श्यामलम् ॥

"I adore Śrī Rāma, who is dark-brown (of complexion) and is comfortably seated along with Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory) in the posture of a warrior (with one knee touching the ground) on a throne of gems as the centre of the aerial car Puṣpaka under an extensive pavilion of gold at the front of a celestial (wish-yielding) tree, surrounded by Bharata and others, with Hanumān (son of the wind-god) propounding in front of Śrī Rāma before the hermits the highest truth (already) expounded (by others). To His left is seated Sītā (Daughter of Goddess Earth); facing Him sits Hanumān and at His back Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā); Śatrughna and Bharata are seated on His two sides, while in the corners between every two quarters (*viz*, north-west, north-east, south-east and south-west) are seated Sugrīva (the ruler of monkeys), Vibhīṣaṇa (the ogre king of Lanka), Crown prince Angada (son of Tārā) and Jāmbavān (the lord of bears) respectively; and in the centre I worship Śrī Rāma, who is cerulean of hue and is endowed with the soft lustre of a blue lotus."

SALUTATIONS TO ŚRĪ RĀMA'S *ENTOURAGE*

रामं रामानुजं सीतां भरतं भरतानुजम् ।
सुग्रीवं वायुसूनुं च प्रणमामि पुनः पुनः ॥
नमोऽस्तु रामाय सलक्ष्मणाय
देव्यै च तस्यै जनकात्मजायै ।
नमोऽस्तु रुद्रेन्द्रयमानिलेभ्यो
नमोऽस्तु चन्द्रार्कमरुद्गणेभ्यः ॥

"I respectfully bow down again and again to Śrī Rāma; His younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa), Sītā, Bharata and His younger brother (Śatrughna), Sugrīva and Hanumān (son of the wind-god). Hail to Śrī Rāma, accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa, as well as to that godlike lady, Janaka's Daughter! Hail to Rudra (the god of destruction), Indra (the ruler of gods), Yama (the god of retribution) and the wind-god! Hail to the moon-god, the sun-god and the troops of the wind-gods !"

SALUTATIONS TO ŚRĪMAD RĀMĀYAṆA

चरितं रघुनाथस्य शतकोटिप्रविस्तरम् ।
एकैकमक्षरं पुंसां महापातकनाशनम् ॥
वाल्मीकिगिरिसम्भूता रामाम्भोनिधिसंगता ।
श्रीमद्रामायणी गङ्गा पुनाति भुवनत्रयम् ॥
वाल्मीकेर्मुनिसिंहस्य कवितावनचारिणः ।
शृण्वन् रामकथानादं को न याति परां गतिम् ॥

"The story of Śrī Rāma (the Protector of the Raghus) extends to a hundred crore couplets. Every single letter of this (vast book) destroys the major sins of people (going through it). The holy Gangā in the form of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa, which has descended from the mountain in the form of Sage Vālmīki and flows to the ocean embodied as Śrī Rāma, purifies (all) the three worlds (with its contact). Hearing the roar, in the form of Śrī Rāma's narrative, of Vālmīki, the lion among sages, roaming in the forest of poetry, who would not attain to the highest goal ?"

Once the reader has started reading the Rāmāyaṇa he should not pause before the end of any canto. If he does so he should resume reading it from the very canto which he has left unfinished. The reading should be carried on at a moderate pitch, distinctly, with reverence and love. It is not desirable to read it in a singing-voice, shaking one's head, hurriedly and unintelligently. At the close of day one should pause at the following places—

1st day	Pause 1	at the end of	Canto	6	of	Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa.	
2nd day	Pause 2	– do –	,,	80	of	– do –	
3rd day	Pause 3	– do –	,,	20	of	Araṇya-Kāṇḍa	
4th day	Pause 4	– do –	,,	46	of	Kiṣkindhā-Kāṇḍa	
5th day	Pause 5	– do –	,,	47	of	Sundarakāṇḍa	
6th day	Pause 6	– do –	,,	50	of	Yuddha-Kāṇḍa	
7th day	Pause 7	– do –	,,	99	of	Yuddha-Kāṇḍa	
8th day	Pause 8	– do –	,,	36	of	Uttarakāṇḍa	
9th day	Pause 9	– do –	,,	111	of	– do –	followed by a second

reading of the 1st Canto of Yuddha-Kāṇḍa*

---

* प्रथमे तु अयोध्यायाः षट्सर्गान्ते शुभा स्थितिः । तस्यैवाशीतिसर्गान्ते द्वितीये दिवसे स्थितिः ॥
तथा विंशतिसर्गान्ते चारण्यस्य तृतीयके । दिने चतुर्थे षट्चत्वारिंशत्सर्गे कथास्थितिः ॥
किष्किन्धाख्यस्य काण्डस्य पाठविद्भिरुदाहृता । सुसप्तचत्वारिंशत्के सर्गान्ते सुन्दरे स्थितिम् ॥
पञ्चमे दिवसे कुर्यादथ षष्ठे तथोच्यते । युद्धकाण्डस्य पञ्चाशत्सर्गान्ते विमला स्थितिः ॥
एकोनशतसंख्याके सर्गान्ते सप्तमे दिने । युद्धस्यैव तु काण्डस्य विश्रामः सम्प्रकीर्तितः ॥
तथा चोत्तरकाण्डस्य षट्त्रिंशत्सर्गपूरणे । अष्टमे दिवसे कृत्वा स्थितिं च नवमे दिने ॥
शेषं समाप्य युद्धस्य चान्त्यं सर्गं पुनः पठेत् । रामराज्यकथा यस्मिन् सर्ववाञ्छितदायिनी ॥
एवं पाठक्रमः पूर्वैराचार्यैश्च विनिर्मितः ।

(अनुष्ठानप्रकाश)

There are other places also where one should pause. According to another scheme the Uttara-Kāṇḍa is omitted while reading the Rāmāyaṇa. The places where one should pause according to this scheme are noted below:—

1st day	Pause 1	at the end of	Canto 77	of Bālakāṇḍa
2nd day	Pause 2	– do –	,, 60	of Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa
3rd day	Pause 3	– do –	,, 119	of – do –
4th day	Pause 4	– do –	,, 68	of Araṇya-Kāṇḍa
5th day	Pause 5	– do –	,, 49	of Kiṣkindhā-Kāṇḍa
6th day	Pause 6	– do –	,, 50	of Sundarakāṇḍa
7th day	Pause 7	– do –	,, 50	of Yuddha-Kāṇḍa
8th day	Pause 8	– do –	,, 111	of – do –
9th day	Pause 9	– do –	,, 128	of – do –

At the conclusion of the reading every day the following benedictory verses should be read:—

स्वस्ति प्रजाभ्यः परिपालयन्तां
न्याय्येन मार्गेण महीं महीशाः ।
गोब्राह्मणेभ्यः शुभमस्तु नित्यं
लोकाः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु ॥
काले वर्षतु पर्जन्यः पृथिवी सस्यशालिनी ।
देशोऽयं क्षोभरहितो ब्राह्मणाः सन्तु निर्भयाः ॥
अपुत्राः पुत्रिणः सन्तु पुत्रिणः सन्तु पौत्रिणः ।
अधनाः सधनाः सन्तु जीवन्तु शरदां शतम् ॥
चरितं रघुनाथस्य शतकोटिप्रविस्तरम् ।
एकैकमक्षरं प्रोक्तं महापातकनाशनम् ॥
शृण्वन् रामायणं भक्त्या यः पादं पदमेव वा ।
स याति ब्रह्मणः स्थानं ब्रह्मणा पूज्यते सदा ॥
रामाय रामभद्राय रामचन्द्राय वेधसे ।
रघुनाथाय नाथाय सीतायाः पतये नमः ॥
यन्मङ्गलं सहस्राक्षे सर्वदेवनमस्कृते ।
वृत्रनाशे समभवत् तत् ते भवतु मङ्गलम् ॥
यन्मङ्गलं सुपर्णस्य विनताकल्पयत् पुरा ।
अमृतं प्रार्थयानस्य तत्ते भवतु मङ्गलम् ॥
मङ्गलं कोसलेन्द्राय महनीयगुणात्मने ।
चक्रवर्तितनूजाय सार्वभौमाय मङ्गलम् ॥
अमृतोत्पादने दैत्यान् घ्नतो वज्रधरस्य यत् ।
अदितिर्मङ्गलं प्रादात् तत् ते भवतु मङ्गलम् ॥
त्रीन् विक्रमान् प्रक्रमतो विष्णोरमिततेजसः ।
यदासीन्मङ्गलं राम तत्ते भवतु मङ्गलम् ॥
ऋषयः सागरा द्वीपा वेदा लोका दिशश्च ते ।
मङ्गलानि महाबाहो दिशन्तु तव सर्वदा ॥

कायेन वाचा मनसेन्द्रियैर्वा
बुद्ध्याऽऽत्मना वा प्रकृतिस्वभावात् ।
करोमि यद् यत् सकलं परस्मै
नारायणायेति समर्पये तत् ॥

"Let all be well with (all) created beings. Let (all) the rulers of the earth protect the earth following the righteous path. Let prosperity ever attend on the cows and the Brahmans (members of the priestly class). Let all the people be happy. Let the rain-god pour showers in time. Let the earth be adorned with crops. Let this land be free from agitation and let the Brahmans be rid of (all) fear. May those without a son be blessed with a son and may those with a son be blessed with a grandson. May those who are destitute become rich and live for a (whole) century. The story of Śrī Rāma (the Protector of the Raghus) extends to a hundred crore couplets. Every single letter of this (vast book) destroys the major sins of people (going through it). He who listens with devotion to a single foot of a verse or even to a single word of Śrīmad Rāmāyaṇa ascends (after death) to the realm of Brahmā (the creator) and is always honoured by the latter. Hail to Lord Śrī Rāma, the blessed Rāma, the moon-like Rāma, the Maker and Controller of the universe, the Protector of the Raghus, the Spouse of Sītā ! Let that good luck attend on You, which fell to the lot of Indra, (the thousand-eyed god)—who is greeted by all the gods—on the occasion of the destruction of the demon Vṛtra. Let that benediction descend on You, which Vinatā (mother of Garuḍa) bestowed on Garuḍa (the king of birds and the carrier of Lord Viṣṇu) when the latter went out in search for nectar. Good luck to the Ruler of the territory of Kosala, an ocean of laudable virtues, son of a universal monarch ! Good luck to the Ruler of the entire globe ! Let that benediction go to You, which Aditi (the mother of Indra) bestowed on Indra (the wielder of a thunderbolt) when the latter destroyed the demons on the occasion of churning the ocean for drawing out nectar. Let that good luck attend on You, which fell to the lot of Lord Viṣṇu—who is endowed with immense energy,—while He was taking three strides (to measure all the three worlds). Let (all) the seasons, the (four) oceans (supposed to encircle the earth), (all) the (seven) Dwīpas (principal divisions of the earth), (the deities presiding over) the (four) Vedas and the (three) Lokas as well as the (four) quarters scatter blessings on You on all occasions, O mighty-armed Sri Rāma ! Whatever I do with my body, tongue, mind or senses, reason or intellect or by force of my inherited nature, I consecrate all as an offering to the supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa."

The way in which Nyāsas should be gone through before commencing the reading of individual Kāṇḍas from different interested motive is given below for each Kāṇḍa separately[10] :—

---

[10] The Bṛhaddharma-Purāṇa specifies as follows the purposes for which a reading of the various Kāṇḍas should be undertaken separately :—

अनावृष्टिर्महापीडाग्रहपीडाप्रपीडिताः ।
आदिकाण्डं पठेयुर्ये ते मुच्यन्ते ततो भयात् ॥
पुत्रजन्मविवाहादौ गुरुदर्शन एव च ।
पठेच्च शृणुयाच्चैव द्वितीयं काण्डमुत्तमम् ॥
वने राजकुले वह्निजलपीडायुतो नरः ।
पठेदारण्यकं काण्डं शृणुयाद् वा स मङ्गली ॥
मित्रलाभे तथा नष्टद्रव्यस्य च गवेषणे ।
श्रुत्वा पठित्वा कैष्किन्ध्यं काण्डं तत्तत् फलं लभेत्॥
श्राद्धेषु देवकार्येषु पठेत् सुन्दरकाण्डकम् ।
शत्रोर्जये समुत्साहे जनवादे विगर्हिते ॥
लङ्काकाण्डं पठेत् किं वा शृणुयात् स सुखी भवेत् ।
याः पठेच्छृणुयाद् वापि काण्डमभ्युदयोत्तरम् ॥
आनन्दकार्ये यात्रायां स जयी परतोऽत्र च ॥
मोक्षार्थी लभते मोक्षं भक्त्यर्थी भक्तिमेव च ।
ज्ञानार्थी लभते ज्ञानं ब्रह्मतत्त्वोपलम्भकम् ॥

"Those who, when hit hard by drought, acute pain or the evil influence of planets, read the Bālakāṇḍa are rid of such fear. On the occasion of the birth of a son, a wedding etc. or at the sight of one's preceptor one should read or listen to the excellent Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa (Book Two). A man who reads or listens to the Araṇya-Kāṇḍa when hit by fire or water while living in a forest (as an anchorite or as an exile) or when summoned to a king's court (or a court of justice) becomes happy. Listening to or reading the Kiṣkindhā-Kāṇḍa for securing a friend or in the course of a search for lost property, the hearer or reader attains his object.

VINIYOGA OF THE BĀLAKĀṆḌA

ॐ अस्य श्रीबालकाण्डमहामन्त्रस्य ऋष्यशृङ्ग ऋषिः । अनुष्टुप् छन्दः । दाशरथिः परमात्मा देवता । रां बीजम् । नमः शक्तिः । रामायेति कीलकम् । श्रीरामप्रीत्यर्थे बालकाण्डपारायणे विनियोगः ।

ṚṢYĀDI-NYĀSA

ॐ ऋष्यशृङ्गऋषये नमः शिरसि । ॐ अनुष्टप्छन्दसे नमः मुखे । ॐ दाशरथिपरमात्मदेवतायै नमः हृदि । ॐ रां बीजाय नमः गुह्ये । ॐ नमःशक्तये नमः पादयोः । ॐ रामाय कीलकाय नमः सर्वाङ्गे ।

KARANYĀSA

ॐ सुप्रसन्नाय अङ्गुष्ठाभ्यां नमः । ॐ शान्तमनसे तर्जनीभ्यां नमः । ॐ सत्यसंधाय मध्यमाभ्यां नमः । ॐ जितेन्द्रियाय अनामिकाभ्यां नमः । ॐ धर्मज्ञाय नयसारज्ञाय कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः । ॐ राज्ञे दाशरथये जयिने करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः ।

After performing Hṛdayādi-Nyāsa with these very Mantras one should meditate according to the following verse:—

श्रीराममाश्रितजनामरभूरुहेश-
मानन्दशुद्धमखिलामरवन्दिताङ्घ्रिम् ।
सीताङ्गनासुमिलितं सततं सुमित्रा-
पुत्रान्वितं धृतधनुश्शरमादिदेवम् ॥

"I worship Śrī Rāma, the primal deity, the foremost wish-yielding tree (lit., a celestial tree) for people dependent on Him, who is Joy personified and immaculate, whose feet are adored even by the immortals, who is constantly united with His (divine) Consort, Sītā, and accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) and who holds a bow and an arrow in His hands."

ॐ सुप्रसन्नः शान्तमनाः सत्यसंधो जितेन्द्रियः ।
धर्मज्ञो नयसारज्ञो राजा दाशरथिर्जयी ॥

"The victorious King Rāma (son of Daśaratha), who is denoted by the mystic-syllable 'OM', is exceedingly cheerful, tranquil of mind and true to His promise. He keeps his senses under control, knows what is right and is a master of the essence of polity."

One should worship Lord Śrī Rāma while uttering the foregoing Mantra and should read the Bālakāṇḍa repeating the word "Rāma" or this very verse at the beginning and end of each single verse. By doing so one can expect to secure the appeasement of evil stars, riddance from the fear of Ītis* (unforeseen calamities) and the birth of a male progeny.

THE VINIYOGA AND NYĀSAS PERTAINING TO THE AYODHYĀ-KĀṆḌA

ॐ अस्य श्रीअयोध्याकाण्डमहामन्त्रस्य भगवान् वसिष्ठ ऋषिः । अनुष्टुप् छन्दः । भरतो दाशरथिः परमात्मा देवता । भं बीजम् । नमः शक्तिः । भरतायेति कीलकम् । मम भरतप्रसादसिद्ध्यर्थमयोध्याकाण्डपारायणे विनियोगः । ॐ वसिष्ठऋषये नमः शिरसि । ॐ अनुष्टुप्छन्दसे नमः मुखे । ॐ दाशरथिभरतपरमात्मदेवतायै नमः हृदि । ॐ भं बीजाय नमः गुह्ये । ॐ नमःशक्तये नमः पादयोः । ॐ भरताय कीलकाय नमः सर्वाङ्गे ।

KARANYĀSA

ॐ भरताय नमस्तस्मै अङ्गुष्ठाभ्यां नमः । ॐ सारज्ञाय तर्जनीभ्यां नमः । ॐ महात्मने मध्यमाभ्यां नमः । ॐ तापसाय अनामिकाभ्यां नमः । ॐ अतिशान्ताय

One should read the Sundarakāṇḍa in the course of a Śrāddha (a ceremony performed in honour of the departed spirit of a deceased relative on his or her death anniversary and on other occasions) or in the course of rites intended to propitiate a deity or deities. He who reads or listens to the Lankā-Kāṇḍa (Yuddha-Kāṇḍa) for the subjugation of an enemy, in the course of a war-effort and in the event of an abominable scandal becomes happy. He who reads or even listens to the Uttarakāṇḍa (the book dealing with the events following Śrī Rāma's success in Lankā) during an act of rejoicing or before a journey or expedition attains victory here as well as hereafter. Nay, a seeker of Mokṣa (Liberation) attains Liberation, a seeker of Devotion secures even Devotion, a seeker of Wisdom attains Wisdom that enables one to realize the truth about Brahma (the Absolute)."

(Bṛhaddharma Purāṇa, Pūrva-Khaṇḍa, xxvi. 9—15)

* The six Ītis or unforeseen calamities are:—

अतिवृष्टिरनावृष्टिर्मूषकाः शलभाः शुकाः ।
अत्यासन्नाश्च राजानः षडेता ईतयः स्मृताः ॥

"Excessive rainfall, drought, a swarm of rats, locusts and parrots and hostile kings arrived very near are the six unforeseen calamities."

कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः । ॐ शत्रुघ्नसहिताय च करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः ।

After going through the Hṛdayādi-Nyāsa with these very Mantras one should meditate according to the following verse :—

श्रीरामपादद्वयपादुकान्त-
संसक्तचित्तं कमलायताक्षम् ।
श्यामं प्रसन्नवदनं कमलावदात-
शत्रुघ्नयुक्तमनिशं भरतं नमामि ॥

"I ever bow down to Bharata, who has his mind fixed on the edges of the pair of wooden sandals used by Śrī Rāma, who has eyes large as a pair of lotuses, who is dark-brown of complexion and wears a cheerful aspect and is accompanied by Śatrughna, who is white as a lotus."

भरताय नमस्तस्मै सारज्ञाय महात्मने ।
तापसायातिशान्ताय शत्रुघ्नसहिताय च ॥

"Hail to that high-souled ascetic, Bharata, who knows what is essential, is extremely quiet and is (ever) accompanied by Śatrughna."

One should offer worship to Bharata with the usual five articles of worship (*viz*, sandal-paste, flowers, incense, light and food) while uttering the foregoing Mantra. A seeker of riches may read the Bālakāṇḍa while uttering the foregoing Mantra before as well as at the end of each single verse of this book.

THE VINIYOGA AND ṚṢYĀDI-NYĀSA ETC. PERTAINING TO THE ARAṆYA-KĀṆḌA

ॐ अस्य श्रीमदरण्यकाण्डमहामन्त्रस्य भगवानृषिः । अनुष्टुप् छन्दः । महेन्द्रो देवता । ईं बीजम् । नमः शक्तिः । इन्द्रायेति कीलकम् । इन्द्रप्रसादसिद्ध्यर्थे अरण्यकाण्डपारायणे जपे विनियोगः । ॐ भगवदृषये नमः शिरसि । ॐ अनुष्टप्छन्दसे नमः मुखे । ॐ महेन्द्रदेवतायै नमः हृदि । ॐ ईं बीजाय नमः गुह्ये । ॐ नमःशक्तये नमः पादयोः । ॐ इन्द्राय कीलकाय नमः सर्वाङ्गे ।

KARANYĀSA

ॐ सहस्रनयनाय अङ्गुष्ठाभ्यां नमः । ॐ देवाय तर्जनीभ्यां नमः । ॐ सर्वदेवनमस्कृताय मध्यमाभ्यां नमः । ॐ दिव्यवज्रधराय अनामिकाभ्यां नमः । ॐ महेन्द्राय कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः । ॐ शचीपतये करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः ।

After going through the Hṛdayādinyāsa with this very Mantra one should meditate according to the following verse :—

शचीपतिं सर्वसुरेशवन्द्यं
सर्वार्त्तिहन्तारमचिन्त्यशक्तिम् ।
श्रीरामसेवानिरतं महान्तं
वन्दे महेन्द्रं धृतवज्रमीड्यम् ॥

"I salute the exalted and mighty Indra (the lord of paradise) of incoñcievable energy, the spouse of Śachī and the dispeller of all afflictions, who is worth extolling and worthy of adoration for all the rulers of gods, who is (ever) devoted to the service of Śrī Rāma and wields the thunderbolt." Then, while uttering the following Mantra, one should offer worship to Indra and may read the Araṇya-Kāṇḍa uttering it before as well as the end of every single verse of this book for recovery of lost property and other such purposes :

सहस्रनयनं देवं सर्वदेवनमस्कृतम् ।
दिव्यवज्रधरं वन्दे महेन्द्रं च शचीपतिम् ॥

"I salute the mighty god, Indra, the spouse of Śachī, who is endowed with a thousand eyes, is adored by all gods and wields the heavenly thunderbolt."

THE VINIYOGA AND ṚṢYĀDINYĀSA PERTAINING TO THE KIṢKINDHĀ-KĀṆḌA

ॐ अस्य श्रीकिष्किन्धाकाण्डमहामन्त्रस्य भगवान् ऋषिः । अनुष्टुप् छन्दः । सुग्रीवो देवता । सुं बीजम् । नमः शक्तिः । सुग्रीवेति कीलकम् । मम सुग्रीवप्रसादसिद्ध्यर्थे किष्किन्धाकाण्डपारायणे विनियोगः । ॐ भगवदृषये नमः शिरसि । ॐ अनुष्टुप्छन्दसे नमः मुखे । ॐ सुग्रीवदेवतायै नमः हृदये । ॐ सुंबीजाय नमः गुह्ये । ॐ नमःशक्तये नमः पादयोः । ॐ सुग्रीवाय कीलकाय नमः सर्वाङ्गे ।

KARANYĀSA

ॐ सुग्रीवाय अङ्गुष्ठाभ्यां नमः । ॐ सूर्यतनयाय तर्जनीभ्यां नमः । ॐ सर्ववानरपुंगवाय मध्यमाभ्यां नमः ।

ॐ बलवते अनामिकाभ्यां नमः। ॐ राघवसखाय कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः। ॐ वशी राज्यं प्रयच्छतु इति करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः।

After going through Hṛdayādi-Nyāsa with the same Mantra one should meditate according to the following verse :—

सुग्रीवमर्कतनयं कपिवर्यवन्द्य-
मारोपिताच्युतपदाम्बुजमादरेण।
पाणिप्रहारकुशलं बलपौरुषाढ्य-
माशास्यदास्यनिपुणं हृदि भावयामि॥

"I invoke in my heart Sugrīva, son of the sun-god, worthy of adoration (even) for the foremost of monkeys, who has installed with reverence in his heart the lotus-feet of the infallible Lord Śrī Rāma, who is adept in slapping with his hands, rich in strength and virility and skilled in the service of his beloved master (Śrī Rāma)."

Then, offering worship to Sugrīva with the sacred text "सुं सुग्रीवाय नमः" or the following verse :—

सुग्रीवः सूर्यतनयः सर्ववानरपुंगवः।
बलवान् राघवसखा वशी राज्यं प्रयच्छतु॥

"May Sugrīva, son of the sun-god, the foremost of all the monkeys, the mighty friend of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) and a master of his self, confer sovereignty on me."
—the reader may, if he chooses, read the Kiṣkindhā-Kāṇḍa uttering the foregoing verse before and at the end of every single verse of that book.

THE VINIYOGA AND ṚṢYĀDINYĀSA OF THE SUNDARAKĀṆḌA

ॐ अस्य श्रीमत्सुन्दरकाण्डमहामन्त्रस्य भगवान् हनुमान् ऋषिः। अनुष्टुप् छन्दः। श्रीजगन्माता सीता देवता। श्रीं बीजम्। स्वाहा शक्तिः। सीतायै कीलकम्। सीताप्रसादसिद्ध्यर्थे सुन्दरकाण्डपारायणे विनियोगः। ॐ भगवद्धनुमदृषये नमः शिरसि। ॐ अनुष्टुपछन्दसे नमः मुखे। ॐ श्रीजगन्मातृसीतादेवतायै नमः हृदि। ॐ श्रीं बीजाय नमः गुह्ये। ॐ स्वाहाशक्तये नमः पादयोः। ॐ सीतायै कीलकाय नमः सर्वाङ्गे।

KARANYĀSA

ॐ सीतायै अङ्गुष्ठाभ्यां नमः। ॐ विदेहराजसुतायै तर्जनीभ्यां नमः। ॐ रामसुन्दर्यै मध्यमाभ्यां नमः। ॐ हनुमता समाश्रितायै अनामिकाभ्यां नमः। ॐ भूमिसुतायै कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः। ॐ शरणं भजे करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः।

Then, going through Hṛdayādinyāsa etc. with the same Mantras, one should meditate according to the following verse :—

सीतामुदारचरितां विधिसाम्बविष्णु-
वन्द्यां त्रिलोकजननीं शतकल्पवल्लीम्।
हैमैरनेकमणिरञ्जितकोटिभागै-
र्भूषाचयैरनुदिनं सहितां नमामि॥

"I bow to Sītā of noble conduct, worthy of being saluted (even) by Brahmā (the creator) as well as by Lords Śiva and Viṣṇu, the Mother of all the three worlds (heaven, earth and the intermediate region), who embodies in Herself hundreds of heavenly creepers capable of granting the desires of those seeking their shade, and remains adorned all day long with heaps of gold ornaments whose edges are rendered picturesque with numerous gems."

The special procedure recommended for reading the Sundarakāṇḍa is that, starting with the first canto on the first day, one should go on increasing the number of cantos to be read by one every day and stop reading on the eleventh day. On the twelfth day the reader should read the first ten cantos over again after finishing the last two cantos left unread the previous day; on the 13th day he should read 13 cantos more and so on. In this way by going through the text thrice in the course of 20 days one can expect to achieve one's desired end. According to another scheme one should read five cantos daily. On the 14th day one should finish the last three cantos left on the previous day and the first two cantos over again and so on. The Mantra to be repeated before and after every single verse is "श्रीसीताय नमः".*

THE VINIYOGA AND ṚṢYĀDINYĀSA ETC. PERTAINING TO THE YUDDHA-KĀṆDA

ॐ अस्य श्रीयुद्धकाण्डमहामन्त्रस्य विभीषण ऋषिः। अनुष्टुप् छन्दः। विधाता देवता। बं बीजम्। नमः शक्तिः। विधातेति कीलकम्। श्रीधातृप्रसादसिद्ध्यर्थे युद्धकाण्डपारायणे विनियोगः। ॐ विभीषणऋषये नमः शिरसि। ॐ अनुष्टुप्छन्दसे नमः मुखे। ॐ विधातृदेवतायै नमः हृदि। ॐ वं बीजाय नमः गुह्ये। ॐ नमःशक्तये नमः पादयोः। ॐ विधातेति कीलकाय नमः सर्वाङ्गे।

KARANYĀSA

ॐ विधात्रे अङ्गुष्ठाभ्यां नमः। ॐ महादेवाय तर्जनीभ्यां नमः। ॐ भक्तानामभयप्रदाय मध्यमाभ्यां नमः। ॐ सर्वदेवप्रीतिकराय अनामिकाभ्यां नमः। ॐ भगवत्प्रियाय कनिष्ठिकाभ्यां नमः। ॐ ईश्वराय करतलकरपृष्ठाभ्यां नमः।

After going through Hṛdayādinyāsa with the same Mantras one should meditate according to the following verse :—

देवं विधातारमनन्तवीर्यं
भक्ताभयं श्रीपरमादिदेवम्।
सर्वामरप्रीतिकरं प्रशान्तं
वन्दे सदा भूतपतिं सुभूतिम्॥

"I salute every day the god Brahmā (the creator), the glorious and the highest primal deity, who is endowed with infinite virility and who ensures safety to his devotees, who brings delight to all the immortals, is perfectly tranquil and the ruler of (all) created beings and possesses abundant affluence."

Then, offering worship to the creator with the fivefold traditional equipage uttering the following verse:—

विधातारं महादेवं भक्तानामभयप्रदम्।
सर्वदेवप्रीतिकरं भगवत्प्रियमीश्वरम्॥

"I salute Brahmā (the creator), the supreme deity, who confers security on his devotees, brings joy to all the gods and is a lover of the Lord and the ruler of all."—the reader may, if he chooses, read the Yuddha-Kāṇḍa uttering this very text at the beginning as well as at the end of every single verse. This ensures victory over the enemy and brings an end to ignominy.

It is also enjoined that the whole of the Rāmāyaṇa should be read in the course of 27 days beginning from the day on which the contellation Punarvasu is in the ascendant and ending on the day when the asterisk Ārdrā is in the ascendant. A nine-day reading of the Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa is also undertaken during the first nine days of the bright half of Chaitra or Āświna popularly known by the name of Navarātra.

---

* As an alternative the following verse can also be repeated at the beginning as well as at the end of every verse :—

रामभद्र महेष्वास रघुवीर नृपोत्तम।
भो दशास्यान्तकास्माकं रक्षां देहि श्रियं च ते॥

"O blessed Śrī Rāma, wielding a mighty bow, O Hero of Raghu's race, O Jewel among kings, O Destroyer of Rāvaṇa (the ten-headed monster), (pray) grant us Your protection as well as Your fortune."

The Valmiki-Ramayana

Bāla-Kāṇḍa

Book One

Number of Discourse :

1. The celestial sage Nārada narrates to Vālmiki the Story of Śrī Rāma in a nutshell. 1
2. Brahmā's visit 10
3. A brief outline of the Rāmāyaṇa as given by the poet himself 14
4. After his ascension to the throne of Ayodhya Śrī Rāma listens to his own story as sung by his sons (Kuśa and Lava). 19
5. A description of the city of Ayodhya 23
6. A description of the city of Ayodhya and the prosperity of its inhabitants during the reign of King Daśaratha 25
7. The virtue and upright conduct of the eight ministers of Emperor Daśaratha 28
8. The king's proposal to perform a horse-sacrifice for being blessed with a son and the acclamation of the counsellors and other Brahmans 31
9. A dialogue between Emperor Daśaratha and Sumantra 33
10. How the sage Ṛṣyaśṛnga was lured away to the capital of Romapāda and married to his adopted daughter, Śāntā. 35
11. Urged by Sumantra, Emperor Daśaratha calls on his friend, King Romapāda, and brings with the latter's permission Śāntā and Ṛṣyaśṛnga to his own palace. 39
12. Emperor Daśaratha gives his consent to the performance of a horse-sacrifice for being blessed with a son. 41
13. Feudatory chiefs called under orders of the emperor and charged with the duty of setting up stables etc. 44
14. King Daśaratha proceeds with the horse-sacrifice; Ṛṣyaśṛnga grants him a boon regarding the birth of four sons. 47
15. Ṛṣyaśṛnga conducts a sacrifice for securing the birth of sons to Daśaratha; the gods approach Brahmā in that very sacrifice with a prayer for bringing about the death of Rāvaṇa; Brahmā implores Lord Viṣṇu (also present there) to descend in the house of

Daśaratha and do away with Rāvaṇa and the Lord undertakes to kill Rāvaṇa. 54

16. A dialogue between Lord Viṣṇu and the gods bearing on Rāvaṇa; on the disappearance of the Lord an attendant of Prajāpati (Lord Viṣṇu, the Protector of all created beings) rises from the sacrificial pit and hands over to Daśaratha a basin containing milk boiled with rice and sugar and the latter divides it among his wives. 57

17. Birth of monkey chiefs from the loins of different gods under the direction of Brahmā. 60

18. Advent of Śrī Rāma, Bharata and others; festivities in heaven as well as in Ayodhya; their investiture with the sacred thread; the arrival of Viśwāmitra. 63

19. King Daśaratha is stunned to hear the request of Viśwāmitra to send Śrī Rāma with him to dispose of the Rākṣasas that interfered with his sacred observances. 69

20. Daśaratha declines to part with Śrī Rāma, thereby enraging Viśwāmitra. 71

21. The wrath of Viśwāmitra; the intercession of Vasiṣṭha in favour of Viśwāmitra 74

22. King Daśaratha sends Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with Viśwāmitra and the two princes receive initiation from the latter in the two mystic spells Balā and Atibalā. 76

23. Night-long sojourn of Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with Viśwāmitra in a holy hermitage at the confluence of the Ganga and the Sarayu. 79

24. An account of the Sarayu given by Viśwāmitra; some facts relating to the ogress Tāṭakā revealed and hints given about killing her. 81

25. Questioned by Śrī Rāma, Viśwāmitra tells him more about the birth of Tāṭakā, of her marriage with Suṇda, as well as about the birth of Mārīcha as a result of their union, and how the latter was subjected to an execration by the sage Agastya, and finally urges Śrī Rāma to despatch the ogress. 84

26. Śrī Rāma kills Tāṭakā. 86

27. Gratified with the death of Tāṭakā, Viśwāmitra imparts to Śrī Rāma the knowledge of the various missiles. 90

28. At the request of Śrī Rāma the sage Viśwāmitra instructs him as well as Lakṣmaṇa in the process of calling back the missiles and delivers some more missiles to them. 92

29. Viśwāmitra tells Śrī Rāma the history of Siddhāśrama and arrives at his own hermitage with the two brothers. 94

30. Śrī Rāma protects the sacrifice of Viśwāmitra against the onslaught of the Rākṣasas and gets rid of them. 98

31. Accompanied by Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and a host of Ṛṣis, Sage Viśwāmitra proceeds northward in the direction of Mithilā to witness the bow-sacrifice of King Janaka and breaks his journey on the bank of the Sone at sunset. 100

32. An account of the four sons of Kuśa; the hundred daughters of Kuśanābha turn hunch-backed under a curse of the wind-god. 103

33. Kuśanābha applauds the forbearance and forgiveness of his daughters; the story of the birth of Brahmadatta and his marriage with Kuśanābha's daughters. 105

34. Kuśanābha performs a sacrifice for the birth of a son and is blessed with one, Gādhi by name; the glory of the river Kauśikī (the modern Kosi in Bihar). 108

35. Crossing the Sone, Viśwāmitra and party reach the bank of the holy Ganga and spend the night there. Requested by Śrī Rāma, he narrates the story of the origin of the Ganga. 110

36. Gods interrupt the amorous pastimes of Lord Śiva and His Consort, Goddess Umā, on which She curses gods including Mother Earth. 113

37. A detailed account of Kārtikeya's birth through Ganga. 116

38. The narrative of King Sagara, a former king of Ayodhya and a forefather of Śrī Rāma. 119

39. Indra steals away the horse released by Sagara as a prelude to his horse-sacrifice; his sixty thousand sons proceed to excavate the earth in quest of the horse and the gods in terror apprise Brahmā of this daring of theirs. 121

40. Brahmā reassures the gods by telling them that the sons of Sagara will be destroyed by the curse of Sage Kapila. The sons of Sagara in the course of their excavation arrive in the presence of Kapila and, behaving insolently towards him, are forthwith reduced to ashes by the fire of his wrath. 123

41. Under orders of Sagara his grandson Aṃśumān proceeds to Rasātala through the underground passage made by his uncles and, bringing back the sacrificial horse, tells the king about the fate of his uncles. 126

42. Aṃśumān and his grandson, Bhagīratha, successively practise austerities for bringing down the Ganga to the terrestrial plane. Brahmā grants a boon to Bhagīratha and exhorts him to propitiate Lord Śiva and secure His consent to receive the Ganga on His head. 129

43. Pleased with the asceticism of Bhagīratha, Lord Śiva receives the Ganga on His head and discharges it into Bindusarovara. Branching forth into seven streams it then accompanies Bhagīratha to Rasātala and liberates his forbears on the way. 131

44. Applauding Bhagīratha, Brahmā urges him to gratify the souls of his departed great grand-uncles by offering them the water of the Ganga, and after doing his bidding Bhagīratha returns to his capital; the glory of hearing and reading the story of Ganga's descent on earth. 135

45. Viśwāmitra tells Śrī Rāma how in the remote past the gods and the demons conjointly churned the ocean of milk, using Mount Mandara as the churning rod, how Lord Śiva drank off the deadly poison skimmed out of it, how as a result of that churning appeared Lord Dhanvantari, a bevy of Apsarās, the beverage known by the name of Vāruṇī, the horse Uchchaiḥśravā, the Kaustubha gem and nectar, and how the conflict of gods and the Daityas ended in the destruction of the latter. 137

46. Disconsolate over the death of her sons, Diti embarks on a course of austerities at Kuśaplava with the permission of her husband, Sage Kaśyapa, with the object of securing a son capable of killing Indra. The latter on

coming to know of her intention serves her during the period of her consecration and, taking advantage of her falling asleep on one occasion with her head in a wrong position and thereby transgressing the rules of purity, enters her womb and carves the foetus. 142

47. Viśwāmitra tells Śrī Rāma how on the very site of the grove where Diti practised her austerities Viśāla, a son of Ikṣwāku, built the city of Viśālā. Sumati, the contemporary ruler of Viśālā, receives Viśwāmitra and his party as his distinguished guests. 144

48. Having stayed overnight at Viśālā as an honoured guest of Sumati, Śrī Rāma, accompanied by Viśwāmitra and the other sages, heads towards Mithilā (the capital of King Janaka) and, reaching on the way a deserted hermitage and, inquiring about it is told by Viśwāmitra how Ahalyā, wife of Sage Gautama, whose hermitage it was, was subjected to a curse by her husband. 146

49. At the intercession of the gods Indra is supplied with testicles of a ram; Ahalyā gets back her pristine celestial form at the very sight of Śrī Rāma the moment he enters the hermitage, and the two divine brothers are entertained by the lady with the help of her husband. 149

50. Śrī Rāma and others reach Mithilā and are received in advance by King Janaka, headed by his family priest, Śatānanda, and Viśwāmitra satisfies their curiosity about the two princes of Ayodhya. 152

51. At the request of Śatānanda Viśwāmitra tells him how Ahalyā was redeemed by Śrī Rāma and entertained him with the help of her husband. And Śatānanda in his turn commences narrating to Śrī Rāma the story of Viśwāmitra. 154

52. Vasiṣṭha enjoins his cow of plenty, Śabalā by name, to yield necessary articles for entertaining Viśwāmitra. 157

53. Heartily entertained along with his army by Vasiṣṭha with delicious foods and drinks yielded by his cow of plenty, Viśwāmitra asks of him the cow, which Vasiṣṭha declines to part with. 159

54. On Viśwāmitra attempting to take her away by force, Śabalā seeks to know Vasiṣṭha's mind, and at his instance produces a multitude of warriors that disperse Viśwāmitra's army. 161

55. His entire army having been exterminated by the warriors produced by Śabalā and his hundred sons reduced to ashes by the very roar of Vasiṣṭha even as they assailed him, Viśwāmitra retires to the Himalayas for austerities and, receiving a number of missiles from Lord Śiva, tries them on the inmates of Vasiṣṭha's hermitage; Vasiṣṭha meets him with a mere staff appropriate to a Brahman. 163

56. With his Brahmanical staff alone Vasiṣṭha renders ineffectual all the mystic missiles discharged by Viśwāmitra, whereupon the latter condemns military strength and makes up his mind to practise austerities with a view to attaining Brahmanhood. 166

57. Viśwāmitra embarks on a severe course of austerities with a view to attaining Brahmanhood. In the meantime King Triśanku of Ayodhya requests Vasiṣṭha to conduct for him a sacrifice which may enable him bodily to ascend to heaven and, on Vasiṣṭha declining

to comply with his request, approaches his sons for the same purpose. 169

58. Having been repulsed by Vasiṣṭha's sons as well, Triśanku gets ready to seek another priest, whereupon he is degraded by the curse of Vasiṣṭha's sons to the position of a Chaṇḍāla and approaches Viśwāmitra with the same request. 171

59. Viśwāmitra assures Triśanku of his help, sends word to a number of sages, inviting them to conduct a sacrifice for Triśanku, and pronounces a curse on those who declined to come. 174

60. At the instance of Viśwāmitra the sages assembled at his hermitage commence a sacrifice; on the gods failing to appear at the sacrifice to accept the offerings, Viśwāmitra sends Triśanku bodily to heaven by dint of his own spiritual power, but the latter is expelled by Indra, on which Viśwāmitra stops him in the air and proceeds to create a new heaven and desists from his purpose only on the gods granting his desire. 176

61. The animal to be sacrificed at the sacrificial performance of King Ambarīṣa having been stolen away by Indra appearing in disguise, the arch-priest enjoined the king to secure a human beast as a substitute. Wandering in search of such a beast, Ambarīṣa saw the sage Ṛchīka at Bhṛgutunga and requested him to hand over his juvenile son in exchange for a hundred thousand cows. On the parents declining to part with their eldest and youngest sons, the middle one, Śunaḥśepa by name, voluntarily offered himself for being sold and the king returned with him to his capital. 179

62. On reaching Pushkar, while Ambarīṣa is taking rest, Śunaḥśepa approaches Viśwāmitra, who was practising austerities there, and inquires of him a means of escaping death without meeting with the king's opposition, whereupon Viśwāmitra teaches him a prayer each for propitiating Indra and Lord Viṣṇu respectively, by reciting which the boy secures release from Ambarīṣa's bondage and the latter gets the reward of the sacrifice without sacrificing him. 182

63. Brahmā pays a visit to Viśwāmitra at Pushkar and rewards him with the status of a Ṛṣi (seer). There he feels enamoured of Menakā, a celestial nymph deputed by Indra, and enjoys life with her for ten years. At last he realizes his folly and retires to the Himalayas, where he renews his austerities and is rewarded with the status of a Maharṣi by Brahmā. Still dissatisfied, he prosecutes his austerities with renewed vigour. 185

64. Petrifying by means of a curse Rambhā, the celestial nymph sent by Indra to wean him from his austerities, Viśwāmitra resolves upon a further course of austerities. 187

65. On Viśwāmitra not ceasing from his austerities even on his being conferred the title of a Brahmarṣi by Brahmā, Vasiṣṭha as urged by gods recognizes it and here ends the narration of Śatānanda. Having worshipped Viśwāmitra, King Janaka then returns to his palace. 189

66. On Viśwāmitra apprising Janaka of the eagerness of Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa to see his famous bow, Janaka reveals to him its glory and

tells him how he got it as well as Sītā and also of his pledge to give her in marriage to Śrī Rāma if he should string it. 193

67. Urged by Viśwāmitra, Śrī Rāma bends the bow, sent by Janaka to the sacrificial hall, in order to string it and in the process breaks it, whereupon Janaka with the concurrence of Viśwāmitra sends his counsellors to Ayodhya to invite Emperor Daśaratha for the wedding. 196

68. Reaching Ayodhya, the counsellors of Janaka tell Daśaratha how Śrī Rāma broke the bow of Janaka and won the hand of his daughter, and convey to him their master's invitation for the wedding, on which Daśaratha makes up his mind in consultation with Vasiṣṭha to depart for Mithilā at an early date. 193

69. With a large number of followers Daśaratha proceeds to Mithilā for the wedding and is received with signal honour by Janaka and his people and comfortably lodged. 200

70. Janaka sends for his younger brother, Kuśadhwaja, from Sānkāśyā. Invited by him, Daśaratha meets Janaka at the latter's palace, where at the instance of Daśaratha Vasiṣṭha glorifies the race of Ikṣwāku. 202

71. Recounting his own pedigree, Janaka offers the hand of his two daughters, Sītā and Ūrmilā, to Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa respectively. 206

72. Vasiṣṭha and Viśwāmitra jointly ask for the hand of the two daughters of Kuśadhwaja in favour of Bharata and Śatrughna and Janaka acquiesces in the proposal. Thereupon Daśaratha gets his sons to perform the rite of Samāvartana and himself performs the Nāndīśrāddha. 208

73. Janaka escorts Daśaratha and his four sons clad in nuptial attire to the pavilion erected for the wedding. Placing Viśwāmitra and Śatānanda at his head, Vasiṣṭha conducts the marriage ceremony. Śrī Rāma and his three brothers clasp the hand of Sītā and her sisters. Singing and dancing for joy, the gods rain heavenly flowers on the brides and bridegrooms. 211

74. Taking leave of Janaka and Daśaratha, Viśwāmitra returns to his own hermitage and, accepting large wedding presents, Daśaratha too turns back to Ayodhya along with his sons and their newly-wedded brides. On the way the irascible and redoubtable Paraśurāma, a sworn enemy of the Kṣatriyas, suddenly appears before them, axe in hand, and Vasiṣṭha and the other sages accompanying the party offer worship to him. 214

75. Turning a deaf ear to Daśaratha's prayer, Paraśurāma relates the history of the bows belonging to Lords Śiva and Viṣṇu, and challenges Śrī Rāma to string the bow of Lord Viṣṇu in his possession. 216

76. Fitting the arrow to the bow of Lord Viṣṇu and declaring it as unfailing, Śrī Rāma asks Paraśurāma to point out at whom it may be discharged, and at the instance of the latter puts an end to his title to the (ethereal) worlds earned by him through his austerities. Recognizing Śrī Rāma to be no other than Lord Viṣṇu and taking leave of him, Paraśurāma withdraws to Mount Mahendra in order to resume his austerities. 219

77. On the departure of Paraśurāma Śrī Rāma hands over the bow of Lord Viṣṇu to Varuṇa (the god of water) and, sending his army ahead, King Daśaratha enters Ayodhya. After some days Prince Yudhājit, Bharata's maternal uncle, takes away Bharata and Śatrughna to his father's capital. 222

Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa

Book Two

Number of Cantos *Page*

1. Bharata having left for his maternal grandfather's capital along with Śatrughna. Emperor Daśaratha makes up his mind to install Śrī Rāma as Prince Regent and, summoning a number of princes for consultation, confers with them on the subject. 225

2. Daśaratha apprises the assembly of his intention to retire from active rule after delegating the power to Śrī Rāma's able hands and the councillors with one voice say ditto to the proposal and urge the emperor to expedite matters. 230

3. Urged by the emperor to solemnize the installation of Śrī Rāma as Prince Regent, Vasiṣṭha enjoins in his turn Daśaratha's ministers, Sumantra and others, to get ready all requisites for the ceremony. Sent by Sumantra, Śrī Rāma in the meantime calls on his father, who announces his decision to install him as Prince Regent and also tenders some opportune advice to him. Śrī Rāma's chums break the news to Śrī Rāma's mother, Kausalyā; and treasuring in his mind the exhortation of his father and, bowing low to him, Śrī Rāma returns to his own apartments. 236

4. Apprehending obstruction of Śrī Rāma's installation from an ominous dream, Daśaratha summons Srī Rāma immediately and asks him to observe certain sacred vows preliminary to installation along with Sītā. Dismissed by his father, he enters his mother's gynaeceum and after receiving her blessings retires along with Sītā, already present there, to his own palace. 241

5. At the instance of the emperor, Vasiṣṭha calls at Śrī Rāma's palace and, instructing him along with Sītā to fast for the night, returns to Daśaratha. Permitted by the sage, the emperor adjourns the assembly and retires to the gynaeceum. 245

6. Enjoined by the sage Vasiṣṭha Śrī Rāma undertakes a vow to bathe early next morning, worship the gods and sleep for the night on a mat of Kuśa grass. On waking up the next morning, he says his Sandhyā prayers and Brahmans wish him a propitious day. The citizens decorate the city in order to give it a festal appearance and it is thronged with men eager to witness the installation of Śrī Rāma as Prince Regent. 248

7. Beholding the festivities and finding Kausalyā bestowing large gifts of money on Brahmans, Mantharā, a hunch-backed hereditary maid-servant of Queen Kaikeyī, who had accidentally ascended the roof of the palace, inquires of Śrī Rāma's erst-while nurse the occasion for the festivities and, on being told of Śrī Rāma's forthcoming installation, feels enraged and, approaching Kaikeyī, instigates her to stop the installation. Kaikeyī, on the other hand, feels rejoiced over the news and gifts her a jewel as a token of her pleasure. 251

8. While Mantharā was thus trying to impress on Kaikeyī's mind that the installation of Śrī Rāma on the throne of Ayodhya would spell disaster to Bharata, Kaikeyī for her part went on harping on Śrī Rāma's virtues and maintained that his installation as Prince Regent was quite welcome to her.

Mantharā, however, goes on labouring her point and urges Kaikeyī to interrupt the installation. 254

9. Kaikeyī, whose heart was at last poisoned by the malicious gossip of Mantharā as aforesaid, takes a vow to see that Rāma is sent into exile and Bharata installed as Prince Regent, and asks Mantharā herself how to secure that consummation. Mantharā tells her how in the course of a conflict between gods and demons, in which Daśaratha's help was enlisted by the gods, the queen, who had accompanied her husband to the field of operations and had rendered valuable assistance to him at a critical juncture, was offered a couple of boons, which she had kept in abeyance. Mantharā now asks Kaikeyī to demand the banishment of Rāma and the installation of Bharata against the two promised boons. Kaikeyī accordingly throws away her ornaments and lies down on the bare floor in the sulking-room in a sullen mood. 258

10. Having told off Sumantra and others to get together necessaries for the installation of Śrī Rāma, Daśaratha calls on Kaikeyī to break the happy news to her. Not finding her in her apartments, however, he makes inquiries from the portress, who tells him of her presence in the sulking-chamber. The emperor calls on her there and, lifting her up, cajoles her. 264

11. Egged on by Kaikeyī to grant her desire, Daśaratha gives his word of honour to her to that effect. Invoking the presence of gods as witnesses and reminding the emperor of what took place during the conflict of gods and demons, Kaikeyī asks of him the two boons, promised by him, in the shape of exiling Śrī Rāma for a period of fourteen years and installing Bharata as Prince Regent. 268

12. Extolling the virtues of Śrī Rāma and showing him undeserving of exile, the emperor endeavours to dissuade Kaikeyī from her pertinacity in sending Śrī Rāma into exile. Quoting the examples of Hariśchandra and others, Kaikeyī, however, redoubles her insistence. The emperor for his part rebukes her in harsh words and goes the length of falling at her feet in order to bring her round but in vain. 271

13. Further tormented by Kaikeyī through her importunity to have the boons granted by the emperor implemented, the latter piteously wails his lot and reproaches her. The sun having set in the meanwhile, the emperor continues till the following morning his solicitations to Kaikeyī to allow Rāma to be installed as Prince Regent. But, Kaikeyī remaining adamant, the king in his extreme anguish of mind sinks down unconscious on the floor and, on regaining his consciousness, stops all music pertaining to the occasion of the king's quitting his bed. 281

14. Citing other instances of the emperor's fidelity to truth and threatening to lay down her life in the event of his not carrying out her wishes, Kaikeyī insists on his sending Śrī Rāma into exile at once and does not desist from her purpose even when railed at by her husband. In the meantime Sumantra makes his appearance in the gynaeceum and, extolling the emperor, reminds him of his intention to install Śrī Rāma as Prince Regent and eventually leaves the gynaeceum in order to summon Śrī Rāma at the instance of the emperor. 284

15. While going out of the gynaeceum to bring Śrī Rāma, Sumantra sees Vasiṣṭha and others as well as a number of kings waiting at the gate and hastens back to announce their presence to the king. He is, however, sent back to fetch Śrī Rāma and forthwith enters the latter's apartments. 290

16. Seeking the presence of Śrī Rāma, Sumantra communicates to him the emperor's command asking Sumantra to bring Rāma with him, and departs. Mounting his gold chariot and accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa, who holds an umbrella over the former's head and waves a pair of *chowries* in order to fan him, and followed by a number of elephants and horses, Śrī Rāma drives in state to see Daśaratha, listening *en route* to his own glory sung by jubilant men and women. 295

17. Śrī Rāma drives in state to his father's gynaeceum, beholding *en route* the charms of Ayodhya, hearing the blessings and encomia of his friends and relations and ravishing the eyes of all on-lookers, and on reaching his destination sends back his retinue and seeks the presence of his royal father alone. 300

18. Questioned by Śrī Rāma as to what preyed on his father's mind, Kaikeyī tells him all that had happened in the meantime and sternly urges him to depart for the woods. 302

19. Having agreed to leave for the forest, Śrī Rāma proceeds to take leave of his mother Kausalyā. 306

20. Even as Śrī Rāma issued forth from the palace of Queen Kaikeyī, the inmates of the gynaeceum burst into a piteous wail, extolling the prince's virtues. Mother Kausalyā embraces and pronounces her benedictions on Śrī Rāma as the latter approaches her and falls at her feet. On being apprised of the circumstances that had brought him there, she falls to the ground overwhelmed with grief, and weeps bitterly expressing her deep sorrow. 310

21. Consoling Kausalyā in her grief over the impending exile of Śrī Rāma, Prince Lakṣmaṇa opposes the idea of Śrī Rāma's leaving for the forest and, censuring Daśaratha, makes up his mind to accompany his eldest brother. Kausalyā too deters Śrī Rāma from going into exile branding Kaikeyī's command as unjust. Śrī Rāma, however, justifies the command on the ground of its being countenanced by the emperor and requests his mother to grant him leave and perform auspicious rites connected with his departure. 315

22. Śrī Rāma pacifies Lakṣmaṇa, who was angry with Kaikeyī, by denying instrumentality of Kaikeyī in his banishment and laying the entire blame on his own fate. 322

23. Enraged to hear the exhortation of Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa urges in reply that the word of their father was worth ignoring inasmuch as it was divorced from righteousness and, further emphasizing the predominance of personal effort over destiny, persuades Śrī Rāma to take up arms against those who interfere with his installation and occupy the throne of Ayodhya by force. Śrī Rāma, however, pacifies Lakṣmaṇa and impresses on him the imperative necessity of their carrying out the command of their father. 325

24. Finding Śrī Rāma firm in his obedience to the command of his parents, Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother) urges him to take her along with him. On being told, however, that it was incumbent on a matron whose husband

was alive to remain with the latter and serve him, she consents to Śrī Rāma's departure to the forest. 329

25. Having received the mother's benedictions for the journey, Śrī Rāma falls at her feet and proceeds to the apartments of Sītā in order to see her. 332

26. Beholding Śrī Rāma depressed in spirits and lustreless with frustration writ large on his countenance, Sītā, who knew nothing about the interruption of his installation and had been eagerly and joyfully awaiting his ruturn, inquires about the cause of his dejection and is told how his installation has been stopped and how he is going to be sent into exile by his father, and is exhorted to look after her father-in-law and mothers-in-law as before and to treat Bharata and Śatrughna as her own brothers or sons and never to harbour malice towards them. 337

27. Exhorted by Śrī Rāma to stay in Ayodhya to look after his parents, Sītā submits in reply that, she being his counterpart, her exile is implied in his and insists on her being taken with him since she would not be able to bear separation from him. 341

28 Bringing home to Sītā the austerity and hardships of forest life Śrī Rāma tries once more to dissuade her from her insistence on accompanying him to the forest. 343

29. Sītā continues to importune Śrī Rāma to take her to the forest along with him, Śrī Rāma, however, is adamant and goes on consoling her and asking her to stay in Ayodhya. 346

30. Though consoled by Śrī Rāma in many ways, Sītā does not change her mind and seeing her insistent on accompanying him Śrī Rāma agrees to take her to the forest and asks her to prepare for the journey and to give away all her personal property to the Brahmans. 348

31. Hearing the dialogue of Śrī Rāma and Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa seeks his permission to accompany him to the forest, Śrī Rāma, however, desires him to stay in Ayodhya in order to look after his mothers. But seeing his insistence, he agrees to take him as well and urges him to bring Suyajña and other Ṛṣis, accounting them worthy of receiving gifts from him. 352

32. Having received gifts of jewels and ornaments from Śrī Rāma and Sītā, Suyajña invokes divine blessings on the couple. Enjoined by Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa then bestows silk costumes and ornaments etc. on the sons of Sage Agastya and others. Urged by his wife, a sage, Trijaṭa by name, approaches Śrī Rāma and seeks riches from him. Śrī Rāma thereupon bestows on him thousands of cows and distributes his remaining wealth among other Brahmans as well as among his relations and dependants. 356

33. Having distributed his immense riches among the Brahmans and others, Śrī Rāma, accompanied by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, proceeds to his father's gynaeceum to take leave of him. Remaining unruffled even on hearing *en route* the diverse talks of the citizens gathered here and there with melancholy writ large on their faces, the royal trio reach their destination and urge Sumantra to apprise their royal father of their arrival. 360

34. Apprised of Śrī Rāma's arrival by Sumantra, Daśaratha commands him to usher in Śrī Rāma with his consort. Seeing the emperor fall unconscious at the very sight of the heir apparent, the ladies of the royal household start wailing piteously. On Śrī Rāma's soliciting his permission to retire

to the woods the king enjoins him to take his father captive and ascend the throne. Śrī Rāma in his turn consoles his father by assuring him that he has no hankering for royal fortune and that to him obedience to his father's command is of utmost importance. Daśaratha, however, falls unconscious again at the very thought of his separation from Śrī Rāma, and Sumantra as well as all the ladies of the gynaeceum follow suit. 363

35. Hoping that by being provoked to anger Kaikeyī might come round and relax her insistence on sending Śrī Rāma into exile, Sumantra harshly reproaches her, reminding her of her mother's misbehaviour towards her husband (Kaikeyī's father). Kaikeyī, however, remains adamant and does not budge even an inch from her purpose. 369

36. Daśaratha instructs Sumantra to take a detachment of the army and the exchequer along with Śrī Rāma, to which Kaikeyī objects and insists on his being sent into exile without any resources on the analogy of Asamañja, son of his forefather, Sagara. Another minister of the king, Siddhārtha by name, who was present there, opposes Kaikeyī and urges that the analogy of Asamañja, who was a perverse lad, could not be applied in the case of Śrī Rāma, who possessed an ideal character and deserved in every way to be installed in the office of Prince Regent. In the event of Kaikeyī vetoing the proposal the king threatens to accompany the heir apparent. 372

37. Śrī Rāma urges his servants to fetch the bark of trees for being used as his wearing apparel. At this Kaikeyī herself brings them the desired dress, which both Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa cover themselves with taking off their princely robes. Sītā, however, finds it difficult to cover herself with the bark supplied to her and ultimately puts it on over her own dress with the help of Śrī Rāma despite the remonstrances of Vasiṣṭha, who severely castigates Kaikeyī for her cruelty in exiling them. 375

38. Incensed to hear the loud wailing of those present at the scene on Sītā being dressed as a hermitess, Daśaratha reproaches Kaikeyī. While departing, Śrī Rāma entreats his father to take care of his mother. 379

39. Sent away by Daśaratha, Sumantra gets a chariot ready to take Śrī Rāma and his party to the forest and Sītā adorns herself with jewels brought by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Kausalyā tenders opportune advice to her daughter-in-law and the latter bows to it. Śrī Rāma comforts Kausalyā and offers apology to his other mothers, who burst into a wail. 381

40. Going clockwise round Daśaratha (as a token of respect), Sītā, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa greet him. Accompanied by Sītā, Śrī Rāma salutes Kausalyā. Lakṣmaṇa too hails Kausalyā first and then his own mother, Sumitrā. Sumitrā for her part tenders salutary advice to her son. The princes and the princess having mounted the chariot, Sumantra flicks the horses. The citizens that had assembled closely follow the chariot; but unable to keep pace with its swift movement, they return desolate. Daśaratha too runs after the chariot along with Kausalyā and others, but being unable to walk begins to totter and stops short on the road yielding to the remonstrances of his wise ministers. 385

41. The ladies of the royal gynaeceum bewail the exile of Śrī Rāma and others and the citizens of Ayodhya too are reduced to a miserable plight. 390

42. Śrī Rāma having departed for the forest in an exceptionally swift-going chariot, Daśaratha vainly seeks to cover the intervening distance on foot. The very dust raised by the chariot having disappeared after a while, the emperor feels doubly disconsolate and drops to the ground. When Kaikeyī comes forward to support him he scolds her and asks her not to touch his person. Kausalyā then lifts him up and persuades him to return. His personal attendants take him to the latter's apartments and, seeing him plunged in grief, Kausalyā seats herself beside him and begins to lament in various ways. 392

43. The Lament of Kausalyā. 395

44. Establishing the greatness of Śrī Rāma, Sumitrā, who is a past master in eloquence, assuages Kausalyā's grief. 397

45. When the citizens that followed Śrī Rāma in his journey to the forest refuse to return even when requested by Śrī Rāma in many ways, unable as they were to bear separation from him, Śrī Rāma with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa gets down from his chariot and begins to walk. The citizens try to deflect him from his course and persuade him to return, but in vain. At the close of the day they all reach the bank of the Tamasā. 400

46. Having reached the bank of the Tamasā and thinking of the plight of the people of Ayodhya, Śrī Rāma lays himself down on a bed of leaves bewailing the lot of his parents and feeling reassured by the thought of Bharata's noble qualities; while Lakṣmaṇa opens his dialogue with Sumantra on the divine excellences of Śrī Rāma. Waking up in the meantime, Śrī Rāma urges the charioteer-minister to drive the chariot in such a way as to put the citizens that had accompanied them off the scent and lead them to think that the chariot had turned back towards Ayodhya instead of proceeding towards the forest. He then mounts the chariot along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa and presses on to the forest. 403

47. The citizens that had followed Śrī Rāma in his journey to the forest wake to find Śrī Rāma and his party gone and begin to reproach themselves. Overcome with grief they hunt up the tracks of his chariot; but unable to find them, they helplessly return to Ayodhya in utter despondency. 407

48. Told of Śrī Rāma's departure for the forest by the citizens who had gone out with Śrī Rāma and returned, unable as they were to find out the tracks of his chariot, their wives reproach Kaikeyī and break into lamentation. 409

49. Having covered a long distance in the meantime Śrī Rāma finishes his morning bath and devotions and, having crossed the Vedaśruti, Gomatī and Syandikā rivers, presses forward talking with Sumantra. 412

50. Standing with his face turned towards Ayodhya, Śrī Rāma bids farewell to his birth-place and, sending back the people hailing from the countryside, who had come to see him, and crossing the frontiers of Kosala, Śrī Rāma reaches the bank of the holy Ganga. Alighting from the chariot under an Ingudī tree standing on the bank, he goes forward to meet Guha, the chief of the Niṣādas, who had come to meet him. Nay, worshipping the evening twilight and taking water alone (for food and drink), the prince lies down on the ground to repose for the night; while Sumantra, Guha and Lakṣmaṇa spend the night talking together. 414

51. Expressing his readiness to guard the Crown prince and his consort, keeping awake the whole night, Guha importunes Lakṣmaṇa, to repose. Reminding Guha of Śrī Rāma's greatness, Lakṣmaṇa, however, tells him that even though the duty of guarding his princely brother and his consort could as well be entrusted to Guha, he felt that he did not deserve to lie down in the presence of his elder brother and sister-in-law and preferred to remain awake. Expressing grief for his royal father and loving mothers he therefore spends the night talking with Guha. 419

52. While about to step into the boat brought by Guha's men and asked by Guha if he could be of any further use to the prince, Śrī Rāma enjoins him to obey the emperor. Importuned by Sumantra to take him as a personal attendant to the forest, the prince declines his loving offer and, expostulating with him, sends him back to Ayodhya. Entangling their locks into a thick mass with the milk of a banyan tree procured by Guha, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with Sītā get into the boat. On reaching the middle of the stream Sītā offers prayers to Mother Ganga (the deity presiding over the stream) and after crossing the river all the three halt for the night at the foot of a tree. 422

53. Apprehending trouble for Kausalyā and others at the hands of Kaikeyī, Śrī Rāma, who was seated at the foot of a banyan tree and was a past master in the art of persuasion, persuades Lakṣmaṇa to the best of his ability to return to Ayodhya. Lakṣmaṇa, however, pleads inability to survive in his absence and does not budge an inch from his resolution to stay with his eldest brother. Śrī Rāma, therefore, yields and sets his seal to his continuing with him during his exile. 431

54. Set out on his journey for the Daṇḍaka forest with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, Śrī Rāma reaches at dusk the hermitage of Sage Bharadwāja in the vicinity of the confluence of the holy Ganga and Yamuna rivers. Paying due honours to Śrī Rāma and his party, the sage recommends Chitrakoot as the fittest place for him to sojourn in. Spending the night in discourses on various topics with him, the sage grants him leave early next morning to depart for Chitrakoot. 435

55. Sage Bharadwāja tells Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, even as they set out on their journey to Chitrakoot, the route by which they should proceed. Accompanied by Sītā, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa cross the Yamuna on a raft prepared by themselves. In the evening they halt on the bank of the Yamuna along with Sītā, who is rejoiced to get fruits and blossoms of her liking. 439

56. Moving further next morning and rejoicing on the way to see the loveliness of the forest, the party reaches Chitrakoot and enters the hermitage of Vālmīki. Making up his mind to sojourn there with the permission of the sage, Śrī Rāma gets Lakṣmaṇa to erect a hut of leaves for themselves and, worshipping the deities presiding over the structure, they solemnly enter their abode at a propitious hour. 442

57. Having been told of Śrī Rāma's departure for Chitrakoot by the spies of Guha and taking leave of the latter, Sumantra drives back to Ayodhya. Entering the royal gynaeceum, he submits to the emperor what he

reported earlier to the citizens who followed his chariot. Daśaratha and Kausalyā fall into a swoon to hear about Śrī Rāma's departure for Chitrakoot, and all the inmates of the gynaeceum burst into a wail from agony. 446

58. Bewailing the lot of Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, who did not in any way deserve the hardships they were undergoing in the forest, the emperor urges Sumantra to deliver their parting message and the charioteer proceeds to tell him what they said. 449

59. To satisfy the emperor's curiosity Sumantra tells him further of Śrī Rāma's departure for the forest, and also apprises him of the pitiable condition of the animate as well as of the inanimate creation in his realm as also of his capital consequent on Śrī Rāma's exile. Hearing of the woeful tale, Daśaratha raves like a madman in many ways in the presence of the charioteer-minister. 453

60. Sumantra does not succeed in soothing the agony of Kausalyā, who tossed about on the floor due to excess of grief over her separation from Śrī Rāma, even though he consoles her by telling her that Śrī Rāma, being resolute and high-minded, was living in the forest free from agony. 456

61. Apprehending danger to the king from his inability to bear the grief caused by separation from Śrī Rāma, Kausalyā, though foremost among devoted wives, twits Daśaratha. 458

62. When reproached in harsh words by Kausalyā, though already feeling disconsolate through separation from his sons and daughter-in-law, Daśaratha falls into a swoon recalling his past sin in the form of killing a hermit boy, which was responsible for his present misfortune. On waking from his swoon he tries with joined palms to conciliate Kausalyā and, on the latter reciprocating his sentiments, the emperor is lulled into a nap. 461

63. Waking from sleep after a while and recalling his sinful deed, which spelt death to him, Daśaratha proceeds to tell Kausalyā how, while he was Prince Regent of Ayodhya, he went out a hunting in the forest one day and heard during the last watch of the night the sound of a hermit boy filling his pitcher with water by submerging it into the Sarayu river. Mistaking the gurgling sound for the trumpeting of an elephant, the prince hit the boy with an arrow, which dug deep into his body and mortally wounded him. On approaching his quarry he discovered the fatal blunder and tendered his heartfelt apology to the hermit boy, who asked him to extract the arrow from his body and report the matter to his aged parents. The boy died immediately the arrow was taken out of his body. 463

64. Daśaratha continues to tell Kausalyā how, having sought the presence of the aged parents of the deceased, he apprised them of the sad incident and escorted them to the river bank, where their son lay dead; how, clasping the boy to their bosom, they both piteously wailed and offered libations of water to his spirit for its benefit; how, invested with an ethereal body, the spirit ascended to heaven while consoling the aged couple and finally

how, having cursed the king that he too would meet his death in his agony of separation from his son, the ascetic couple gave up the ghost and attained the Supreme. Having thus related the story of his imprecation and loudly lamenting, the emperor breathes his last with the thought of Śrī Rāma foremost in his mind. 468

65. When the emperor did not wake up even though roused by means of panegyrics sung by bards, accompanied by musical instruments played upon for the same purpose, the ladies of the gynaeceum conclude by other means that the king is dead; and soon after commences the loud wail of Kausalyā, Sumitrā and other queens. 475

66. Resting the head of the lifeless monarch in her own lap and severely reproaching Kaikeyī, Kausalyā grievously mourns for Śrī Rāma and other exiles. Holding back Kausalyā,—who was lamenting with her arms placed round her deceased husband's bosom—and consigning the emperor's dead body to a trough filled with oil, the ministers and other functionaries return each to his own abode in the evening. 478

67. Attributing the rise and fall of a kingdom to the presence and disappearance of its ruler, Mārkaṇḍeya and other great sages, who attended the king's court the following day, urge Vasiṣṭha to install any of the princes on the throne immediately. 481

68. With the concurrence of Mārkaṇḍeya and other sages, Vasiṣṭha despatches messengers to call back Bharata and Śatrughna from their maternal grandfather's. They leave forthwith for the capital of Kekaya and quickly enter that city. 484

69. Finding Bharata oppressed and sad, his friends try to beguile him by means of music and narration of stories. But when the prince does not return to his normal mood even then, they inquire of him as to what makes him pensive and Bharata tells them how he saw a bad dream the previous night. 487

70. While Bharata was narrating to his friends the dream seen by him the previous night, the messengers from Ayodhya arrive in his presence and, bowing low to Bharata, communicate to him the orders of Sage Vasiṣṭha. Having heard of the welfare of all from the mouth of the messengers, the prince takes leave of his maternal grandfather and others and departs for Ayodhya. 489

71. When Bharata reaches Ayodhya after crossing many streams and rivers and passing through different territories and finds the city cheerless and wearing a deserted look, he sets about brooding and speculating as to what may be the reason for this and, speaking to the charioteer about it, enters the palace dejected and disconsolate. 492

72. Entering his father's apartments and not finding him there, Bharata moves to his mother's apartments and, having communicated to her the welfare of his maternal grandfather and others on being questioned by her, inquires of her the whereabouts of his father. Kaikeyī then breaks to him the news of his father's death, attributing it to Śrī Rāma's exile and holding herself responsible for the latter, and after comforting him calls upon him to get himself installed on the throne after finishing his father's obsequies. 496

73. Bitterly reproaching Kaikeyī in many ways, and cutting her to the quick by his caustic remarks, Bharata takes a vow before her to bring back Śrī Rāma from the forest, install him on the throne of Ayodhya and wait upon him as an attendant to offend her. 501

74. Severely reproaching his mother once more, and making up his mind not only to bring back Śrī Rāma from the forest and crown him king but also to go into exile for fourteen years in order to redeem his elder brother's vow, Bharata, who was filled with rage at the thought of the mischief wrought by his mother, cannot contain his grief and falls unconscious to the ground. 504

75. Swearing that what had already come to pass in the shape of exile of Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa and the resultant death of the King-Emperor was not to his liking, Bharata moves with Śatrughna to the apartments of his stepmother, Kausalyā, who speaks unkindly to him taunting him with the remark that his mother, Kaikeyī, had rendered good offices to him by securing for him the kingdom of Kosala sought after by him. Bharata, however, politely denies on a number of oaths all complicity in the machinations of his vile mother. Thereby coming to know his heart, the guileless Kausalyā places Bharata on her lap and weeps bitterly. 507

76. Removing his father's dead body from the vessel full of oil and cremating it with the help of articles befitting an emperor, and offering libations of water to the spirit of the deceased on the bank of the Sarayu as enjoined by Vasiṣṭha, Bharata returns to Ayodhya. 514

77. Having performed with the help of Śatrughna all the obsequial rites relating to his deceased father on the twelfth day after his death, Bharata gifts to the Brahmans abundant gold and jewels as a part of the obsequies. Overwhelmed with grief on reaching the funeral pile in order to pick up the principal bones of the deceased on the thirteenth day, the prince drops to the ground. Rolling on the ground, Śatrughna for his part wails in profusion. Comforted by Vasiṣṭha and Sumantra, the two brothers urge the ministers to expedite the work of picking up the bones. 516

78. While Bharata is contemplating to undertake a journey to meet Śrī Rāma, Śatrughna blames Lakṣmaṇa for failing to restrain his father and forcibly prevent Śrī Rāma's exile. In the meantime Bharata catches sight of Mantharā standing at the door decked with ornaments and points to her as the root of all mischief. Śatrughna thereupon pounces upon the maid-servant standing in the midst of her companions and, seizing her by her locks, drags her on the floor and reproaches Kaikeyī too. On the latter pleading for mercy on Mantharā's behalf, Bharata intervenes and Śatrughna lets her go. 519

79. On the fourteenth day the foremost of the counsellors entreat Bharata to accept the throne. Turning down their entreaty, Bharata, who is keen to bring Śrī Rāma back to Ayodhya, urges them to detail expert engineers to construct a road, bridges and causeways etc, to facilitate his journey to the place of Śrī Rāma's abode. 521

80. The engineers detailed by Bharata's ministers construct a broad passage from Ayodhya to the bank of the Ganga and render it easy to tread by erecting pavilions and digging wells here and there on the roadside. 523

81. The king's bards, panegyrists and minstrels having commenced eulogizing Bharata in the customary way in the midst of festal music at sunrise the following morning, Bharata stops it, disclaiming sovereignty, and complains to Śatrughna of the ill turn done to the world by his own mother. In the meantime Sage Vasiṣṭha enters the royal court and sends messengers to Bharata urging him to be present in the court; and in response to his call Bharata, accompanied by Śatrughna and others, enters the assembly. 525

82. Sage Vasiṣṭha urges Bharata to accept the kingdom bequeathed to him by his father and elder brother. Bharata, however, scornfully declines the offer and takes a solemn pledge to depart for the forest and try his level best to bring his elder brother back to Ayodhya. At his instance Sumantra gets a chariot ready to take him to the forest and brings the chariot to his presence. 527

83. Leaving the capital early next morning, accompanied by the family priests, artisans, army and the citizens, and covering a long distance, Bharata reaches the bank of the holy Ganga at Śṛngaverapura ruled by Guha, and, encamping the army, breaks journey in order to do Śrāddha and Tarpaṇa in honour of his deceased father on the bank of the Ganga and also to give rest to his followers. 531

84. Scenting mischief in the mind of Bharata, who was taking a large army with him, Guha orders the ferrymen to guard the boats so as to prevent Bharata's men from crossing the Ganga, and himself seeks the presence of Bharata in order to know his mind. Being satisfied about his good intention he entertains Bharata and his men with fruits and roots etc. brought by him and, on his having taken rest awhile and overcome his fatigue, allows him to advance. 533

85. Highly praising Guha, Bharata, while departing, inquires of him the way to the hermitage of Bharadwāja. Promising to follow the prince as a guide with his servants and placing his misgivings before him, Guha seeks to know his intentions about Śrī Rāma and consoles the prince, who was consequently bewailing, till dusk. 535

86. Guha reports to Bharata how Śrī Rāma and his party broke their journey at Śṛngaverapura and reproduces before him the dialogue that took place between Lakṣmaṇa and himself at night and further tells him how the two brothers entangled their locks into a thick mass, crossed the holy river with Sītā and left for the hermitage of Sage Bharadwāja. 537

87. Overwhelmed with grief to hear from the mouth of Guha how his two brothers got their hair entangled into a mass, Bharata falls unconscious on the ground. On regaining consciousness he despatches Guha to reassure mother Kausalyā, who is filled with apprehension about the safety of Śrī Rāma and his party on hearing of Bharata's swoon, and apprise her of its real cause and also of Śrī-Rāma's welfare. While doing so Guha also tells her how Śrī Rāma and Sītā lay down on a bed of Kuśa grass prepared by Lakṣmaṇa with his own hands when the party broke journey at Śṛngaverapura and how Guha with Lakṣmaṇa kept watch the whole night for the protection of Śrī Rāma and Sītā. 540

88. Showing to Kausalyā and others the bed of Kuśa grass on which Śrī Rāma and Sītā spent their night, and contrasting it with the royal splendour and

luxury in which he lived in Ayodhya, Bharata laments for him and, holding himself responsible for this turn of events and complimenting Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā for throwing their lot with Śrī Rāma and sharing his privations, makes up his mind henceforth to dwell in the forest as a representative of Śrī Rāma, wearing matted locks on his head like him. 542

89. Having encamped his followers including the army, who were ferried across the Ganga by the fishermen enjoined by Guha, Bharata sets out with Sage Vasiṣṭha and others to the hermitage of Sage Bharadwāja with intent to see the latter. 545

90. Leaving his party a couple of miles away on this side of the hermitage, Bharata enters it with Vasiṣṭha and Śatrughna. After exchange of compliments between Sages Vasiṣṭha and Bharadwāja Bharata bows down at the feet of the latter, who inquires after his health and seeks to know his mind about Śrī Rāma. Bharata thereupon regretfully apprises him of his intention to bring Rāma back from the forest and questions him about the latter's whereabouts. To this the sage replies that Śrī Rāma was sojourning on Mount Chitrakoot, and advises Bharata to see the latter the following morning. 548

91. The hospitality shown by Sage Bharadwāja who had acquired rare mystic powers by virtue of his austerities to Bharata, his army and entourage, the kind of which could not be shown even by a ruler of the entire globe. 550

92. Questioned with joined palms about the road to Chitrakoot, Bharadwāja shows the way to Bharata and then inquires of him about the names of his three mothers, who stood bowing down to the sage. Having told him the names of all the three of his mothers with the history of each, and commanding the army to get ready for the journey ahead, Bharata proceeds to Chitrakoot with his retinue. 558

93. Setting his foot on the soil of Chitrakoot with his army and camp-followers, and identifying the place with the help of the features pointed out by Bharadwāja, Bharata commands the army men to look out for the hermitage of Śrī Rāma. Pursuing their search they perceive smoke at some distance and, concluding the site to be the hermitage of Śrī Rāma, Bharata enjoins his army to halt and makes up his mind to walk with Vasiṣṭha and others to that place. 562

94. Diverting his own mind and seeking to please Sītā, Śrī Rāma gives a graphic description of Chitrakoot, stressing the special features. 564

95. In order to humour Sītā, Śrī Rāma gives a description of the river Mandakini to her. 567

96. While recreating himself in the company of Sītā on the lovely hills of Chitrakoot, Śrī Rāma beholds all of a sudden a large cloud of dust screening the sun and hears a loud noise and despatches Lakṣmaṇa to ascertain the cause. Lakṣmaṇa thereupon climbs up the top of a lofty tree and, catching sight of an army with the chariot of its leader distinguished by an ensign bearing the device of a Kovidara tree, hastily concludes that Bharata has come all the way to dispose of Śrī Rāma and thereby to make himself secure on the throne of Ayodhya. Returning apace to the presence of

Śrī Rāma he disburdens himself of his suspicions and speaks angrily about Bharata, swearing that he will kill the intruder. 569

97. Pointing out to Lakṣmaṇa, who was waxing indignant at Bharata, the impropriety of killing the latter, Śrī Rāma pacifies him by assuring him of the pious intentions of Bharata. Ashamed of himself to hear the opinion of his brother about Bharata, and climbing down the tree, Lakṣmaṇa hides his shame by changing the topic. Commanded by Bharata, who was anxious to avoid causing disturbance to the hermitage occupied by Śrī Rāma, the army encamps round about Chitrakoot. 572

98. Telling off Guha and Śatrughna with their followers to find out the hermitage of Śrī Rāma, Bharata himself, who was keen to see Śrī Rāma, goes out in search of his hermitage with the ministers, walking all the way and envying the good fortune of Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, who were living with Śrī Rāma; and, reaching the foot of a sal tree and concluding the place from the presence of smoke near by to be a human habitation and ruling out the possibility of any other human being living in that lonely forest, he eagerly hastens forward in the hope of meeting Śrī Rāma. 575

99. Requesting Vasiṣṭha to fetch his mothers and pressing forward, Bharata reaches the hut, made of leafy twigs, in which the three exiles were living. While attempting to hail Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa on seeing them, he stumbles down even on an even ground, his eyes getting bedimmed with tears at the sight of their ascetic garb. Śrī Rāma hastens to lift him up and clasps him to his bosom. Sumantra and Guha as well meet Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. 577

100. Placing Bharata on his lap, Śrī Rāma gives him instruction in judicature under the pretext of inquiring after the welfare of his father and others. 581

101. Questioned as to what made him give up the sovereignty of Ayodhya and enter the forest in the garb of an ascetic, Bharata reproaches his mother and implores his elder brother to accept the kingship and return to Ayodhya. Śrī Rāma, however, pleads that the command of their father is supreme and must be implicitly obeyed by both of them, the first part of it enjoining the exile of the elder brother being binding on him and the second part bequeathing the kingdom to Bharata being binding on the latter. 589

102. Bharata tells Śrī Rāma that, having been deprived of the privilege of serving his elder brother, he will have nothing to do with sovereignty and requests him to offer water to the spirit of his deceased father, who died with the thought of Śrī Rāma alone foremost in his mind, and further implores him to get himself consecrated for the sovereignty of Ayodhya, the obsequies of their imperial father having beed duly performed by the two brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna) at Ayodhya. 592

103. Fallen into a swoon to hear of his father's ascent to heaven and brought back to consciousness by Bharata and others, who sprinkle water on him and employ other such devices, Śrī Rāma laments in various ways. Comforted by Bharata and having (in his turn) consoled Sītā and repairing to the bank of the Ganga, nay, offering water and balls of cooked food to the spirit of his departed father, he returns to his hut. Hearing their cry of

distress, the troops approach them and are greeted by Śrī Rāma according to their rank. 593

104. Accompanied by Kausalyā and others, Sage Vasiṣṭha proceeds to the hermitage of Śrī Rāma. Showing to her co-wives the lumps of the pulp of the Ingudī fruit offered to the spirit of his deceased father by Śrī Rāma on blades of Kuśa grass placed with their ends pointing to the south along the bank of the Mandakini on the way, Kausalyā grieves for her deceased husband. Reaching the hermitage, Kausalyā and others see the two brothers (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) fall at their feet. Kausalyā bewails the lot of Sītā when the latter falls at her feet. Bowing down at the feet of his preceptor, Śrī Rāma takes his seat. Accompanied by the counsellors, Bharata too sits near by. 598

105. Bharata implores Śrī Rāma to oblige him by accepting the throne of Ayodhya being offered by him to Śrī Rāma with the concurrence of Kaikeyī, even though bestowed on him by their deceased father. Consoling Bharata, who held himself responsible for Śrī Rāma's exile to the forest and was languishing with sorrow on that score, Śrī Rāma, however, tries to pacify him in various ways and urges him to shoulder the burden of rulership. 601

106. Imploring Śrī Rāma with cogent reasons to accept the throne of Ayodhya, Bharata takes a vow not to return to Ayodhya but to continue in the forest in case Śrī Rāma did not grant his prayer. Mother Kausalyā and others too join Bharata and urge Śrī Rāma to grant his request when they find Śrī Rāma lukewarm in the matter and insistent on implementing the words of their deceased father. 605

107. Śrī Rāma tries to impress upon Bharata,—who believed that Daśaratha was prompted by lustful attachment to his mother in making over the kingdom to him,—that Daśaratha was compelled to do so because, in the first place, he had promised to Kaikeyī's father while marrying her that the latter's son alone would succeed to the throne after Daśaratha's death, and secondly he was keen to repay the debt he owed to her for having come to his rescue in his encounter with the demons, and accordingly urges Bharata to assume the rulership of Ayodhya. 609

108. Bharata having been silenced by Śrī Rāma, an eminent sage, Jābāli by name, tries to persuade Śrī Rāma to accept the throne by advocating the theory of the Nāstikas (non-believers) with intent to arouse in him the lust of sovereignty. 611

109. Jābāli explains the reasons for his advocating the theory of Nāstikas to Śrī Rāma, who exposes the hollowness of the ethics propounded by the sage, dubbing it as the very antithesis of Dharma. 613

110. Pacifying Śrī Rāma, who had got angry with Jābāli, Sage Vasiṣṭha urges him to get himself consecrated as king, since, from Ikṣwāku, the progenitor of his race, downward, the eldest son alone had ascended the throne of Ayodhya and because he was not only the eldest of his father's sons, but the ablest too. 617

111. Pleading the superiority of a teacher in comparison to one's parents, Sage Vasiṣṭha by virtue of his superiority and as a concession to Bharata, a dependant of Śrī Rāma, whose vow it has been to respect the feelings of his dependants, urges Śrī Rāma to grant the prayer of Bharata. Śrī Rāma, however, contends that one's parents are more worthy of respect even than one's teacher and is accordingly insistent on implementing the pledge already given by him to his father. Thus discomfited in argument, Bharata makes up his mind to undertake a fast unto death as a last resort to exert pressure on his brother. On Śrī Rāma's dubbing such a step as repugnant to the code of conduct prescribed for a Kṣatriya, Bharata requests his elder brother to allow him to remain in exile in the forest as the latter's proxy. Srī Rāma, however, rules out this proposition also as something preposterous, saying that one's duty is entrusted to a proxy only on the former's incapacity, which could not be predicated of him, and reaffirms his decision to enter Ayodhya only after fulfilling the pledge given to his father. 621

112. Collected in the heavens to hear the dialogue of Bharata and Śrī Rāma, heavenly beings applaud the two brothers. Having decided upon his course of action, Śrī Rāma turns his face towards his hut; while pleading his inability to protect the kingdom, now that his attempts to take Śrī Rāma back to Ayodhya had been frustrated, Bharata prays to Śrī Rāma for mercy once more. But when he comes to know that his elder brother cannot be made to swerve an inch from his vow, he places a new pair of wooden sandals decked with gold in front of his brother and requests him to place his feet on them. Readily acceding to his request, Śrī Rāma hands over the sandals to Bharata, who takes a vow before the former to enter the fire in case he did not return immediately after the expiry of his term of exile. Śrī Rāma confirms his vow and after embracing Bharata and Śatrughna and, bidding good-bye to all with due respect according to the rank of each, enters his cottage. 624

113. Departed back for Ayodhya along with Sage Vasiṣṭha and others, Bharata pays his respects on the way to Sage Bharadwāja and, apprising him of what had happened at Chitrakoot and also of the pair of wooden sandals that he had received from Śrī Rāma as the latter's representative, and proceeding further, crosses the rivers Ganga and Yamuna along with his followers. Departing from Sṛngaverapura he catches sight of Ayodhya and points out to Sumantra its gloomy appearance. 628

114. Vālmīki portrays the gloomy appearance of Ayodhya with the help of a number of similes. Bharata enters his father's palace with a heavy heart speaking to Sumantra about the sorry spectacle which Ayodhya presented at the moment. 630

115. Permitted by Vasiṣṭha and accompanied by Śatrughna and others, when the queens had entered the gynaeceum, Bharata proceeds to Nandigrāma and, installing the wooden sandals of Śrī Rāma on the royal seat,

himself puts on the garb of an ascetic and carries on the rule under orders of the sandals, holding the royal umbrella over them. 633

116. Learning from outward signs that the ascetics who lived in the vicinity of Śrī Rāma were anxious to shift to some other forest, the latter asks them why they wished to leave the place. Being told in reply that they were being molested by Rākṣasas under the leadership of Khara, he gives his consent and, sending them away with great respect, retires to his own hermitage. 636

117. Afraid of prolonging his stay at Chitrakoot because of many handicaps, Śrī Rāma leaves that mountain and, reaching the hermitage of Sage Atri, greets the aforesaid Ṛṣi. Glorifying the ascetic life of his wife, Anasūyā, the sage urges Rāma to send his consort, Sītā, to her. Kindly receiving the princess, who greeted the venerable old lady on reaching her as instructed by her husband, Anasūyā gives her instructions on the duties of a devoted wife. 638

118. At the end of her dialogue with Sītā Anasūyā requests her to ask a boon of the hermitess and, highly pleased with her, the hermitess bestows heavenly flowers and ornaments on her. Urged by Anasūyā, she relates to the hermitess the story of her marriage. 641

119. Glorifying the evening shades, that had now fallen, Anasūyā sends away Sītā, decked with the ornaments bestowed on her by herself, to the presence of Śrī Rāma. To the latter, who was agreeably surprised to behold Sītā resplendent with heavenly jewels, she relates how she received the jewels as a loving gift from the hermitess. Accepting the hospitality of the hermits and staying with them for the night, Śrī Rāma asks leave of them in the morning to proceed further and, following the route shown by the hermits, the princely party enters the Daṇḍaka forest. 646

◆

श्रीसीतारामचन्द्राभ्यां नमः

श्रीमद्वाल्मीकीयरामायणम्

बालकाण्डम्

प्रथमः सर्गः

The Valmiki-Ramayana

Book One

(Bala-Kanda)

Canto I

The celestial sage Nārada narrates to Vālmīki the Story of Śrī Rama in a nutshell.

ॐ तपःस्वाध्यायनिरतं तपस्वी वाग्विदां वरम् । नारदं परिपप्रच्छ वाल्मीकिर्मुनिपुंगवम् ॥ १ ॥
को न्वस्मिन् साम्प्रतं लोके गुणवान् कश्च वीर्यवान् । धर्मज्ञश्च कृतज्ञश्च सत्यवाक्यो दृढव्रतः ॥ २ ॥
चारित्रेण च को युक्तः सर्वभूतेषु को हितः । विद्वान् कः कः समर्थश्च कश्चैकप्रियदर्शनः ॥ ३ ॥
आत्मवान् को जितक्रोधो द्युतिमान् कोऽनसूयकः । कस्य बिभ्यति देवाश्च जातरोषस्य संयुगे ॥ ४ ॥
एतदिच्छाम्यहं श्रोतुं परं कौतूहलं हि मे । महर्षे त्वं समर्थोऽसि ज्ञातुमेवंविधं नरम् ॥ ५ ॥
श्रुत्वा चैतत्त्रिलोकज्ञो वाल्मीकेर्नारदो वचः । श्रूयतामिति चामन्त्र्य प्रहृष्टो वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥ ६ ॥
बहवो दुर्लभाश्चैव ये त्वया कीर्तिता गुणाः । मुने वक्ष्याम्यहं बुद्ध्वा तैर्युक्तः श्रूयतां नरः ॥ ७ ॥

The ascetic Vālmīki put the following question direct to Nārada, the chief of hermits, (nay) the foremost of those skilled in expression, who remains (ever) engaged in askesis and self-study (the study of the Vedas):—(1) "Who can possibly be full of virtues in this world at present ? Nay, who is possessed of prowess and knows what is right ? Who is conscious of services done, truthful of speech and firm of resolve ? (2) Who is possessed of right conduct and who is friendly to all living beings ? Who is a man of knowledge ? Nay, who is powerful and who has a singularly lovable appearance ? (3) Who has subdued his self ? Who has conquered anger ? Who is possessed of splendour and who is above fault-finding, and whom do the very gods dread when his wrath has been (apparently) provoked in battle ? (4) I wish to hear this; for there is a great curiosity in my mind about it, while you are capable of knowing such a man. O eminent seer !" (5) Hearing this appeal of Vālmīki, the sage Nārada, who possessed knowledge of the three worlds, said, "Listen !" and greatly delighted, addressed the following words:—(6) I shall (duly) consider and tell you (of such a hero) Be pleased to hear (from me) of the man endowed with the manifold and rare virtues that have been described by you. (7)

इक्ष्वाकुवंशप्रभवो रामो नाम जनैः श्रुतः । नियतात्मा महावीर्यो द्युतिमान् धृतिमान् वशी ॥ ८ ॥
बुद्धिमान् नीतिमान् वाग्मी श्रीमाञ्छत्रुनिबर्हणः । विपुलांसो महाबाहुः कम्बुग्रीवो महाहनुः ॥ ९ ॥
महोरस्को महेष्वासो गूढजत्रुररिंदमः । आजानुबाहुः सुशिराः सुललाटः सुविक्रमः ॥१०॥
समः समविभक्ताङ्गः स्निग्धवर्णः प्रतापवान् । पीनवक्षा विशालाक्षो लक्ष्मीवाञ्छुभलक्षणः ॥११॥
धर्मज्ञः सत्यसंधश्च प्रजानां च हिते रतः । यशस्वी ज्ञानसम्पन्नः शुचिर्वश्यः समाधिमान् ॥१२॥
प्रजापतिसमः श्रीमान् धाता रिपुनिषूदनः । रक्षिता जीवलोकस्य धर्मस्य परिरक्षिता ॥१३॥
रक्षिता स्वस्य धर्मस्य स्वजनस्य च रक्षिता । वेदवेदाङ्गतत्त्वज्ञो धनुर्वेदे च निष्ठितः ॥१४॥
सर्वशास्त्रार्थतत्त्वज्ञः स्मृतिमान् प्रतिभानवान् । सर्वलोकप्रियः साधुरदीनात्मा विचक्षणः ॥१५॥
सर्वदाभिगतः सद्भिः समुद्र इव सिन्धुभिः । आर्यः सर्वसमश्चैव सदैव प्रियदर्शनः ॥१६॥
स च सर्वगुणोपेतः कौसल्यानन्दवर्धनः । समुद्र इव गाम्भीर्ये धैर्येण हिमवानिव ॥१७॥
विष्णुना सदृशो वीर्ये सोमवत्प्रियदर्शनः । कालाग्निसदृशः क्रोधे क्षमया पृथिवीसमः ॥१८॥
धनदेन समस्त्यागे सत्ये धर्म इवापरः ।

There is one descended in the line of Ikṣwāku, and known by men by the name of Rāma. He has fully controlled his mind, is very powerful, radiant and resolute and has brought his senses under control. (8) He is intelligent, sagacious, eloquent, glorious and an exterminator of foes. He is distinguished with broad shoulders, powerful arms, a neck shaped as a conch and a stout chin. (9) He is marked with a broad chest, a mighty bow and a collar bone covered with flesh, and is capable of subduing his foes. His (unusually long) arms extend right up to his knees. He has a well-formed head, a shapely forehead and a charming gait. (10) He is of medium stature (neither very tall nor very short), has well-proportioned limbs, has an unctuous complexion, is mighty, has a rounded chest, large eyes, is full of splendour and has auspicious marks on his body. (11) He knows the secret of virtue, and is true to his promise and intent on the good of the people. He is illustrious, full of wisdom, pure in his dealings, a man of self-control and concentrated mind. (12) He is a supporter of the creation like Brahmā (the lord of created beings), affluent, the slayer of his enemies, a protector of living beings and a staunch defender of faith. (13) He is a vindicator of his own virtue and the protector of his own people. He knows the truth of the Vedas and the (six) sciences (grammar etc.) auxiliary to them and is a past master in archery. (14) He knows the real meaning of all the scriptures, is possessed of a sharp memory and quick wit. He is popular in all the worlds, pious, high-minded and shrewd. (15) He is always sought by the righteous (even) as the ocean is by rivers. He is noble, nay, alike to all and always wears a pleasing countenance. (16) He is endowed with all excellences and enhances the delight of (his mother) Kausalyā. He vies with the ocean in profundity and compares with the Himalaya in point of firmness. (17) He is a replica of Lord Viṣṇu in prowess and is pleasing of aspect as the moon. In (show of) anger he resembles the destructive fire at the end of creation and is a counterpart of Mother Earth in forbearance. (18) He equals Kubera (the god of riches, the bestower of wealth) in liberality and is another Dharma (the god of piety) as it were in point of truthfulness.

तमेवंगुणसम्पन्नं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ॥१९॥
ज्येष्ठं ज्येष्ठगुणैर्युक्तं प्रियं दशरथः सुतम् । प्रकृतीनां हितैर्युक्तं प्रकृतिप्रियकाम्यया ॥२०॥
यौवराज्येन संयोक्तुमैच्छत् प्रीत्या महीपतिः । तस्याभिषेकसम्भारान् दृष्ट्वा भार्याथ कैकयी ॥२१॥

पूर्वं दत्तवरा देवी वरमेनमयाचत । विवासनं च रामस्य भरतस्याभिषेचनम् ॥२२॥
स सत्यवचनाद् राजा धर्मपाशेन संयतः । विवासयामास सुतं रामं दशरथः प्रियम् ॥२३॥

With intent to gratify the people the king (Emperor Daśaratha) lovingly sought to invest with the office of Regent his beloved son, Śrī Rāma, who possessed unfailing prowess and was adorned with the aforesaid qualities, who was not only the eldest (of his four sons in point of age) but was also endowed with the highest virtues and devoted to the interests of the people. Witnessing the preparations in connection with the installation of Śrī Rāma, the illustrious Queen Kaikeyī (the youngest of the three principal consorts of Emperor Daśaratha), who had been granted a boon (by the Emperor) on a former occasion (in recognition of her outstanding personal courage and service to her husband on the field of battle), however, asked of him (against the promised boon) the exile of Śrī Rāma and the installation of Bharata (her own son). (19—22) Bound (as he was) by the tie of duty (in the form of his plighted word) due to his (ever) speaking the truth, King Daśaratha exiled his beloved son, Rāma. (23)

स जगाम वनं वीरः प्रतिज्ञामनुपालयन् । पितुर्वचननिर्देशात् कैकेय्याः प्रियकारणात् ॥२४॥
तं व्रजन्तं प्रियो भ्राता लक्ष्मणोऽनुजगाम ह । स्नेहाद् विनयसम्पन्नः सुमित्रानन्दवर्धनः ॥२५॥
भ्रातरं दयितो भ्रातुः सौभ्रात्रमनुदर्शयन् । रामस्य दयिता भार्या नित्यं प्राणसमा हिता ॥२६॥
जनकस्य कुले जाता देवमायेव निर्मिता । सर्वलक्षणसम्पन्ना नारीणामुत्तमा वधूः ॥२७॥
सीताप्यनुगता रामं शशिनं रोहिणी यथा । पौरैरनुगतो दूरं पित्रा दशरथेन च ॥२८॥

In obedience to his father's command in the form of the boon (granted by him in favour of Kaikeyī) and with a view to pleasing Kaikeyī (his stepmother), the heroic Rāma retired to the woods in order to implement the pledge (of his father). (24) His loving (younger) brother, Lakṣmaṇa,—who enhanced the delight of (his own mother) Sumitrā (the younger of the two other principal consorts of Emperor Daśaratha) and who was not only adorned with modesty but a favourite of his brother (Śrī Rāma),—followed his aforesaid brother out of affection as the latter set out (on his journey to the forest), thus testifying to his amicable relation. Śrī Rāma's newly wedded spouse, Ṣītā, (so called because she was unearthed from the track of a ploughshare),—who was dear to him as life and was ever friendly to him, who (though not born in the ordinary way from a mother's womb) was (taken as) descended in the line of Janaka (a king of Mithilā, Sīradhwaja by name, Janaka being his family title), was endowed with all auspicious marks (on her person) and was a (veritable) jewel among women and who looked like the Lord's own wonderful potency manifested by the Lord Himself—also accompanied Śrī Rāma as Rohiṇī (the spouse of the moon-god, also a constellation of that name, follows the moon-god). (Nay,) he was followed afar by the citizens (of Ayodhya) as well as by his (aged) father, Daśaratha. (25-28)

शृङ्गवेरपुरे सूतं गङ्गाकूले व्यसर्जयत् । गुहमासाद्य धर्मात्मा निषादाधिपतिं प्रियम् ॥२९॥
गुहेन सहितो रामो लक्ष्मणेन च सीतया । ते वनेन वनं गत्वा नदीस्तीर्त्वा बहूदकाः ॥३०॥
चित्रकूटमनुप्राप्य भरद्वाजस्य शासनात् । रम्यमावसथं कृत्वा रममाणा वने त्रयः ॥३१॥
देवगन्धर्वसंकाशास्तत्र ते न्यवसन् सुखम् । चित्रकूटं गते रामे पुत्रशोकातुरस्तदा ॥३२॥
राजा दशरथः स्वर्गं जगाम विलपन् सुतम् । गते तु तस्मिन् भरतो वसिष्ठप्रमुखैर्द्विजैः ॥३३॥

नियुज्यमानो राज्याय नैच्छद् राज्यं महाबलः । स जगाम वनं वीरो रामपादप्रसादकः ॥३४॥
गत्वा तु स महात्मानं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् । अयाचद् भ्रातरं राममार्यभावपुरस्कृतः ॥३५॥
त्वमेव राजा धर्मज्ञ इति रामं वचोऽब्रवीत् । रामोऽपि परमोदारः सुमुखः सुमहायशाः ॥३६॥
न चैच्छत् पितुरादेशाद् राज्यं रामो महाबलः । पादुके चास्य राज्याय न्यासं दत्त्वा पुनः पुनः ॥३७॥
निवर्तयामास ततो भरतं भरताग्रजः । स काममनवाप्यैव रामपादावुपस्पृशन् ॥३८॥
नन्दिग्रामेऽकरोद् राज्यं रामागमनकाङ्क्षया ।

Meeting his beloved Guha, the chief of the Niṣādas (a mixed tribe sprung from a Brahman through a Śūdra woman), at Śṛngaverapura on the bank of the Gangā, Śrī Rāma (who was virtue incarnate), accompanied by Guha, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, sent away the charioteer (back to Ayodhya). Going from forest to forest, and crossing streams containing deep water, they (saw the sage Bharadwāja at Prayag and, dismissing Guha there) later on reached Chitrakoot according to the instructions of Bharadwāja and, erecting a lovely cottage, the three sojourned happily there sporting in the woods like gods and Gandharvas (celestial musicians). Śrī Rāma having proceeded to Chitrakoot (on foot as reported by the charioteer, who had since returned to Ayodhya), Emperor Daśaratha forth with (gave up the ghost and) ascended to heaven bewailing his son, stricken as he was with grief at his separation from the latter. Though being urged to accept the throne by the Brahmans headed by the sage Vasiṣṭha (the family priest and preceptor of the kings of Ayodhya), on the king having departed (to the other world), Bharata, who was very powerful, did not covet the throne. He proceeded to the forest in order to please the venerable Rāma (and persuade him to return to Ayodhya and accept his father's throne). (29—34) Approaching the high-souled Rāma of unfailing prowess, Bharata, rich in noble sentiments, actually implored (Śrī Rāma) his (elder) brother (accordingly). (35) He addressed the following words to Śrī Rāma:—"Let you alone be the ruler, since you know what is right." In deference to his father's decree (boon conferring the throne of Ayodhya on Bharata) Śrī Rāma too, who was supremely magnanimous and enjoyed a very great renown, and who (always) wore a gracious aspect, did not hanker for the kingdom. Nay, handing over to Bharata his (own) pair of wooden sandals as his representative to rule over the kingdom, Śrī Rāma, Bharata's elder brother who was possessed of great might persuaded him to return from Chitrakoot after repeated importunities. Without realizing his ambition (of seeing Rāma back in Ayodhya and crowning him king), Bharata returned to Ayodhya, touching the feet of Śrī Rāma (and taking leave of him). (35-38) Longing for the return of Śrī Rāma, he ruled (over the kingdom while living) at Nandigrāma (a lonely retreat fourteen miles from Ayodhya).

गते तु भरते श्रीमान् सत्यसंधो जितेन्द्रियः ॥३९॥

रामस्तु पुनरालक्ष्य नागरस्य जनस्य च । तत्रागमनमेकाग्रो दण्डकान् प्रविवेश ह ॥४०॥
प्रविश्य तु महारण्यं रामो राजीवलोचनः । विराधं राक्षसं हत्वा शरभङ्गं ददर्श ह ॥४१॥
सुतीक्ष्णं चाप्यगस्त्यं च अगस्त्यभ्रातरं तथा । अगस्त्यवचनाच्चैव जग्राहैन्द्रं शरासनम् ॥४२॥
खड्गं च परमप्रीतस्तूणी चाक्षयसायकौ । वसतस्तस्य रामस्य वने वनचरैः सह ॥४३॥
ऋषयोऽभ्यागमन् सर्वे वधायासुररक्षसाम् । स तेषां प्रतिशुश्राव राक्षसानां तदा वने ॥४४॥

प्रतिज्ञातश्च रामेण वधः संयति रक्षसाम् । ऋषीणामग्निकल्पानां दण्डकारण्यवासिनाम् ॥४५॥
तेन तत्रैव वसता जनस्थाननिवासिनी । विरूपिता शूर्पणखा राक्षसी कामरूपिणी ॥४६॥

When Bharata, however, had left, the glorious Rāma of unfailing vow, who had conquered his senses and was intent on one object (*viz*, that of implementing the pledge of his father), entered the Daṇḍaka forest; they say, anticipating the renewed visit of the people of Ayodhya to that region. (39-40) Entering the great forest (of Daṇḍaka) and having despatched the ogre Virādha, the lotus-eyed Rāma saw one after another the sages Śarabhanga and Sutīkṣṇa as well as Agastya and his brother (Idhmavāhana). Nay, at the instance of Agastya himself he accepted with supreme delight a bow, a sword, a pair of quivers containing an inexhaustible store of arrows, (all) bestowed (upon the sage) by Indra (the lord of paradise). While the aforesaid Rāma was sojourning in the forest with foresters, all the seers (dwelling in the forest) called (on him) with a request to make short work of the demons and ogres (haunting the forest). In the presence of those seers dwelling in the forest of Daṇḍaka and glorious as fire Śrī Rāma then agreed to kill the ogres in that forest. Nay, the destruction of the ogres in an encounter was solemnly promised by Rāma. (41–45) The ogress Śūrpaṇakhā (so called because the monstress possessed nails as big as a winnowing fan), who dwelt in Janasthāna (a portion of the Daṇḍaka forest) and was capable of assuming any form at will, was disfigured by Śrī Rāma (by having her nose and ears lopped off by Lakṣmaṇa) while living in that very forest. (46)

ततः शूर्पणखावाक्यादुद्युक्तान् सर्वराक्षसान् । खरं त्रिशिरसं चैव दूषणं चैव राक्षसम् ॥४७॥
निजघान रणे रामस्तेषां चैव पदानुगान् । वने तस्मिन् निवसता जनस्थाननिवासिनाम् ॥४८॥
रक्षसां निहतान्यासन् सहस्राणि चतुर्दश । ततो ज्ञातिवधं श्रुत्वा रावणः क्रोधमूर्च्छितः ॥४९॥
सहायं वरयामास मारीचं नाम राक्षसम् । वार्यमाणः सुबहुशो मारीचेन स रावणः ॥५०॥
न विरोधो बलवता क्षमो रावण तेन ते । अनादृत्य तु तद्वाक्यं रावणः कालचोदितः ॥५१॥
जगाम सहमारीचस्तस्याश्रमपदं तदा । तेन मायाविना दूरमपवाह्य नृपात्मजौ ॥५२॥
जहार भार्यां रामस्य गृध्रं हत्वा जटायुषम् । गृध्रं च निहतं दृष्ट्वा हृतां श्रुत्वा च मैथिलीम् ॥५३॥
राघवः शोकसंतप्तो विललापाकुलेन्द्रियः । ततस्तेनैव शोकेन गृध्रं दग्ध्वा जटायुषम् ॥५४॥
मार्गमाणो वने सीतां राक्षसं संददर्श ह । कबन्धं नाम रूपेण विकृतं घोरदर्शनम् ॥५५॥
तं निहत्य महाबाहुर्ददाह स्वर्गतश्च सः । स चास्य कथयामास शबरीं धर्मचारिणीम् ॥५६॥
श्रमणां धर्मनिपुणामभिगच्छेति राघव । सोऽभ्यगच्छन्महातेजाः शबरीं शत्रुसूदनः ॥५७॥

Śrī Rāma then killed on the field of battle all the ogres that came prepared (for an encounter) at the instigation of Surpaṇakhā, including (their leaders) Khara, Triśirā and the ogre Dūṣaṇa as also their followers. (No less than) fourteen thousand of ogres dwelling in Janasthāna were made short work of by Rāma while sojourning in that forest. Stupefied through anger to hear of the destruction of his kinsmen, Rāvaṇa (the king of Lankā) sought the help of a fellow-ogre (one of the two sons of the ogress Tāḍakā). Mārīcha by name. Though repeatedly discouraged by Mārīcha saying, "It is not advisable for you to make enemies with that powerful prince (Śrī Rāma), O Rāvaṇa !" yet turning a deaf ear to his advice and impelled by death, the aforesaid Rāvaṇa, who made people scream (in terror wherever he went out in expedition) then proceeded to the site of Rāma's hermitage along with Mārīcha. Having caused the two princes (Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) to be removed afar (from the hermitage) by the wily Mārīcha, he stole away Śrī Rāma's spouse (Sītā), killing the vulture Jaṭāyu (who tried to intercept him and thereby deliver Sītā from his cluthes). Now tormented with grief to perceive the vulture mortally wounded and to hear (from it) of Sītā (the princess of Mithilā, the capital of King Janaka) having been forcibly carried off (by Rāvaṇa), Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) loudly wailed, his mind agitated (through perturbation). Then, having cremated the vulture Jaṭāyu and hunting up Sītā in the forest in that very state of grief, Śrī Rāma descried an ogre, Kabandha by name, who was deformed of body and terrible to look at: so the tradition goes. (47—55) Having made short work of him, the mighty-armed prince cremated him (too) and the demon (regained his original form of a Gandharva and) ascended to heaven. Nay, (while rising to heaven) he said to Śrī Rāma, "Seek, O Rāma (a scion of Raghu), Śabarī, a pious hermitess, who is well-versed in the principles of righteousness." The highly glorious Rāma, the destroyer of his foes, (accordingly) approached Śabarī. (56-57)

शबर्या पूजितः सम्यग् रामो दशरथात्मजः । पम्पातीरे हनुमता सङ्गतो वानरेण ह ॥५८॥
हनुमद्वचनाच्चैव सुग्रीवेण समागतः । सुग्रीवाय च तत्सर्वं शंसद्रामो महाबलः ॥५९॥
आदितस्तद् यथा वृत्तं सीतायाश्च विशेषतः । सुग्रीवश्चापि तत्सर्वं श्रुत्वा रामस्य वानरः ॥६०॥
चकार सख्यं रामेण प्रीतश्चैवाग्निसाक्षिकम् । ततो वानरराजेन वैरानुकथनं प्रति ॥६१॥
रामायावेदितं सर्वं प्रणयाद् दुःखितेन च । प्रतिज्ञातं च रामेण तदा वालिवधं प्रति ॥६२॥
वालिनश्च बलं तत्र कथयामास वानरः । सुग्रीवः शङ्कितश्चासीन्नित्यं वीर्येण राघवे ॥६३॥
राघवप्रत्ययार्थं तु दुन्दुभेः कायमुत्तमम् । दर्शयामास सुग्रीवो महापर्वतसंनिभम् ॥६४॥
उत्स्मयित्वा महाबाहुः प्रेक्ष्य चास्थि महाबलः । पादाङ्गुष्ठेन चिक्षेप सम्पूर्णं दशयोजनम् ॥६५॥
बिभेद च पुनस्तालान् सप्तैकेन महेषुणा । गिरिं रसातलं चैव जनयन् प्रत्ययं तदा ॥६६॥

Duly worshipped by Śabarī, Śrī Rāma, son of Daśaratha, came into contact with the monkey chief, Hanumān, on the brink of the Pampā lake: so the tradition goes. (58) At the intercession of Hanumān alone he further made friends with Sugrīva. Nay, to Sugrīva the exceedingly powerful Rāma duly narrated from the very beginning (his very birth) the whole of his popular story and the well-known story of Sītā (his consort) in particular. Pleased to hear the whole narrative of Śrī Rāma, the monkey chief Sugrīva too made friendship with Śrī Rāma in the presence of (the sacred) fire as a witness*. Nay, in response to an inquiry (made by Śrī Rāma) with regard to his enmity (with his own elder brother, Vālī), the whole incident was then related by Sugrīva (the ruler of the monkeys), afflicted as he was, to Śrī Rāma out of affection. Again, a vow was taken by Śrī Rāma that (very) moment to the effect that Vālī would be killed by him. (59—62) And, there (on Mount Ṛṣyamūka) the monkey chief described (to Śrī Rāma) the (unique) strength of Vālī (his elder brother), since Sugrīva was ever full of misgivings concerning Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) in the matter of prowess (*vis-a-vis* his opponent, Vālī). (63) In order to convince Śrī Rāma (of Vālī's strength (Sugrīva actually showed to him the (exceptionally) tall skeleton of (the demon) Dundubhi (killed by Vālī), which looked like a big mountain (and which had been disdainfully kicked away to a long distance by Vālī). (64) Smiling (at this) and gazing on the skeleton, the mighty-armed Rāma, who possessed extraordinary strength, hurled it with his big toe to a distance of full eighty miles. (65) Nay, in order to inspire confidence in (the mind of) Sugrīva Śrī Rāma further pierced on that (very) occasion with a single mighty shaft (one after another as many as) seven palmyra trees (standing in a line adjacent to one another), a hillock (standing by) as well as Rasātala (the sixth subterranean plane including the five preceding ones *viz*, Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talātala and Mahātala). (66)

---

* **It has been customary among the Hindus to contract friendships—more especially matrimonial alliances—in the presence of the sacred fire as a witness with a view to solemnizing them.**

ततः प्रीतमनास्तेन विश्वस्तः स महाकपिः । किष्किन्धां रामसहितो जगाम च गुहां तदा ॥६७॥
ततोऽगर्जद्धरिवरः सुग्रीवो हेमपिङ्गलः । तेन नादेन महता निर्जगाम हरीश्वरः ॥६८॥
अनुमान्य तदा तारां सुग्रीवेण समागतः । निजघान च तत्रैनं शरेणैकेन राघवः ॥६९॥
ततः सुग्रीववचनाद्धत्वा वालिनमाहवे । सुग्रीवमेव तद्राज्ये राघवः प्रत्यपादयत् ॥७०॥
स च सर्वान् समानीय वानरान् वानरर्षभः । दिशः प्रस्थापयामास दिदृक्षुर्जनकात्मजाम् ॥७१॥

Reassured by the latter feat and accompanied by Śrī Rāma, that great monkey (Sugrīva) then marched at once with a mind full of delight to Kiṣkindhā (the capital of Vālī), situated cave-like (in the midst of mountains). (67) Then roared Sugrīva, the monkey chief, who was tawny as gold (in appearance). Distracted by that great (unusual) roar, Vālī (the king of the monkeys) sallied forth (to meet Sugrīva). (68) Reassuring Tārā (his devoted and sagacious wife, who discouraged him by pleading that Sugrīva had since secured the alliance of Śrī Rāma and as such could no longer be conquered), he then closed with Sugrīva and in the course of that (very) encounter Śrī Rāma (the celebrated scion of Raghu) disposed of Vālī with a single arrow. (69) Having (thus) killed Vālī on the field of battle at the instance of Sugrīva, Śrī Rama (a scion of Raghu) then installed Sugrīva himself on Vālī's throne. (70) Bringing together all the monkeys, the said Sugrīva (the jewel among the monkeys) too despatched them in all directions, keen as he was to have Sītā (the daughter of Janaka) traced out. (71)

ततो गृध्रस्य वचनात् सम्पातेर्हनुमान् बली । शतयोजनविस्तीर्णं पुप्लुवे लवणार्णवम् ॥७२॥
तत्र लङ्कां समासाद्य पुरीं रावणपालिताम् । ददर्श सीतां ध्यायन्तीमशोकवनिकां गताम् ॥७३॥
निवेदयित्वाभिज्ञानं प्रवृत्तिं विनिवेद्य च । समाश्वास्य च वैदेहीं मर्दयामास तोरणम् ॥७४॥
पञ्च सेनाग्रगान् हत्वा सप्त मन्त्रिसुतानपि । शूरमक्षं च निष्पिष्य ग्रहणं समुपागमत् ॥७५॥
अस्त्रेणोन्मुक्तमात्मानं ज्ञात्वा पैतामहाद् वरात् । मर्षयन् राक्षसान् वीरो यन्त्रिणस्तान् यदृच्छया ॥७६॥
ततो दग्ध्वा पुरीं लङ्कामृते सीतां च मैथिलीम् । रामाय प्रियमाख्यातुं पुनरायान्महाकपिः ॥७७॥
सोऽभिगम्य महात्मानं कृत्वा रामं प्रदक्षिणम् । न्यवेदयदमेयात्मा दृष्टा सीतेति तत्त्वतः ॥७८॥

Then, according to the counsel of Sampāti, the vulture king (who could see Sītā in Lankā from that distance), the mighty Hanumān leapt across the brackish sea, eight hundred miles broad, (that parted the mainland of India from Lankā). (72) Duly reaching the city of Lankā, ruled over by (the demon king) Rāvaṇa, he found there Sītā confined in a grove of Aśoka trees, contemplating (on the feet of Śrī Rāma). (73) Presenting (to her) the souvenir (in the shape of a signet ring handed over to him by Śrī Rāma) and relating the news (about Śrī Rāma's alliance with Sugrīva and the latter's installation on the throne of Kiṣkindhā after Vālī, his elder brother and mortal enemy, had been got rid of by Śrī Rāma) and having consoled the daughter of King Janaka (with the assurance that her consort would shortly come and rescue her after disposing of the tyrannical Rāvaṇa), Hanumān demolished the outer gate of the orchard. (74) Having made short work of five army-commanders (Pingalanetra and others) as also seven sons of ministers (Jambumālī and so on), and crushed the gallant Akṣa (a son of Rāvaṇa), he allowed himself to be bound (under the spell of a Brahmāstra or missile presided over by Brahmā, the creator, and discharged by Rāvaṇa's heirapparent Meghanāda). (75) Though knowing himself as released by the (aforesaid) missile in consequence of a boon granted by Brahmā (to the effect that after undergoing bondage for about a couple of hours, the missile associated with his name being infallible, he would be rid of it) the hero (Hanumān, who was keen to meet Rāvaṇa) deliberately bore with those ogres who carried him in bondage (to Ravaṇa) (76) Having set on fire the city of Lankā barring (the abode of) Sītā, the princess of Mithilā, alone, the great monkey (Hanumān) then came back (by the same route to Kiṣkindhā) to break the delightful news (of Sītā having been found) to Śrī Rāma. (77) Approaching the high-souled Rāma and going round him clockwise (as a mark of respect), Hanumān (who was possessed of infinite intelligence) submitted (to him) that Sītā had been seen (by him) in reality. (78)

ततः सुग्रीवसहितो गत्वा तीरं महोदधेः । समुद्रं क्षोभयामास शरैरादित्यसंनिभैः ॥७९॥
दर्शयामास चात्मानं समुद्रः सरितां पतिः । समुद्रवचनाच्चैव नलं सेतुमकारयत् ॥८०॥
तेन गत्वा पुरीं लङ्कां हत्वा रावणमाहवे । रामः सीतामनुप्राप्य परां व्रीडामुपागमत् ॥८१॥
तामुवाच ततो रामः परुषं जनसंसदि । अमृष्यमाणा सा सीता विवेश ज्वलनं सती ॥८२॥
ततोऽग्निवचनात् सीतां ज्ञात्वा विगतकल्मषाम् । कर्मणा तेन महता त्रैलोक्यं सचराचरम् ॥८३॥
सदेवर्षिगणं तुष्टं राघवस्य महात्मनः । बभौ रामः सम्प्रहृष्टः पूजितः सर्वदैवतैः ॥८४॥
अभिषिच्य च लङ्कायां राक्षसेन्द्रं विभीषणम् । कृतकृत्यस्तदा रामो विज्वरः प्रमुमोद ह ॥८५॥

Moving to the shore of the (Indian) ocean (in the extreme south), accompanied by Sugrīva, Śrī Rāma then shook the ocean to its lowest depths (in Pātāla, the nethermost subterranean plane) by his arrows glorious as the sun (on the latter refusing to allow passage to the army of monkeys, that sought to march across it in order to reach Lankā in their bid to recover Sītā). (79) (At this) Ocean, the lord of the rivers, not only revealed himself (in person to Śrī Rāma) but also apologized to him (for his refractoriness) and only at the intercession of Ocean Śrī Rāma caused Nala to build a bridge (across the sea). (80) Reaching the city of Lankā along the bridge and killing Rāvaṇa in a (single) combat, Śrī Rāma experienced a sense of great shame on getting back Sītā (who had remained so long at the house of a demon and could be easily pronounced by critics as polluted). (81) Śrī Rāma then spoke harsh words to her in the assembly of monkeys and others. Resenting them the aforesaid Sītā, chaste as she was, entered fire. (82) Coming to know Sītā as sinless from the words of the fire-god (who testified to her chastity), Śrī Rāma thereupon accepted her. All the three worlds, comprising the animate and inanimate creation, along with the hosts of gods and Ṛṣis were pleased with that remarkable feat of the high-souled Rāma (in the shape of the overthrow of Rāvaṇa and the deliverance of Sītā). Honoured by all the gods, Śrī Rāma (thereupon) looked extremely delighted. (83-84) Nay, having installed Vibhīṣaṇa, the chief of the ogres, on the throne of Laṅkā, Śrī Rāma felt accomplished of purpose and, rid of anxiety, greatly rejoiced: so the tradition goes. (85)

देवताभ्यो वरं प्राप्य समुत्थाप्य च वानरान् । अयोध्यां प्रस्थितो रामः पुष्पकेण सुहृद्वृतः ॥८६॥
भरद्वाजाश्रमं गत्वा रामः सत्यपराक्रमः । भरतस्यान्तिके रामो हनूमन्तं व्यसर्जयत् ॥८७॥
पुनराख्यायिकां जल्पन् सुग्रीवसहितस्तदा । पुष्पकं तत् समारुह्य नन्दिग्रामं ययौ तदा ॥८८॥
नन्दिग्रामे जटां हित्वा भ्रातृभिः सहितोऽनघः । रामः सीतामनुप्राप्य राज्यं पुनरवाप्तवान् ॥८९॥

Having received a boon (to the effect that all the combatants that had fought on the side of Śrī Rāma and fallen in battle be restored to life) from the gods (who came in their aerial cars to felicitate Śrī Rāma on his victory, that had brought solace to all the three worlds) and aroused (as though from sleep) the monkeys (fallen in battle), Śrī Rāma flew to Ayodhya in (the aerial car known by the name of) Puṣpaka (that had been snatched by Rāvaṇa from his half-brother, Kubera, the god of riches), accompanied by his relations (Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa) and friends (Vibhīṣaṇa, Sugrīva and others). (86) Reaching the hermitage of the sage Bharadwāja (in the vicinity of Prayag), Śrī Rāma of unfailing prowess despatched Hanumān (in advance) to the presence of Bharata (in order to apprise him of his safe return lest he should be taken unawares). (87) Narrating past history (the circumstances that had led to his exile in the forest) and boarding the celebrated Puṣpaka once more, he then flew to Nandigrāma (then a part of Ayodhya), accompanied by Sugrīva (and others). (88) Having disentangled his matted hair at Nandigrāma along with his (three) brothers and got back Sītā, the sinless Rāma regained his kingdom (too) (89)

प्रहृष्टमुदितो लोकस्तुष्टः पुष्टः सुधार्मिकः । निरामयो ह्यरोगश्च दुर्भिक्षभयवर्जितः ॥९०॥
न पुत्रमरणं केचिद् द्रक्ष्यन्ति पुरुषाः क्वचित् । नार्यश्चाविधवा नित्यं भविष्यन्ति पतिव्रताः ॥९१॥
न चाग्निजं भयं किंचिन्नाप्सु मज्जन्ति जन्तवः । न वातजं भयं किंचिन्नापि ज्वरकृतं तथा ॥९२॥
न चापि क्षुद्भयं तत्र न तस्करभयं तथा । नगराणि च राष्ट्राणि धनधान्ययुतानि च ॥९३॥
नित्यं प्रमुदिताः सर्वे यथा कृतयुगे तथा । अश्वमेधशतैरिष्ट्वा तथा बहुसुवर्णकैः ॥९४॥
गवां कोट्ययुतं दत्त्वा विद्वद्भ्यो विधिपूर्वकम् । असंख्येयं धनं दत्त्वा ब्राह्मणेभ्यो महायशाः ॥९५॥
राजवंशाञ्छतगुणान् स्थापयिष्यति राघवः । चातुर्वर्ण्यं च लोकेऽस्मिन् स्वे स्वे धर्मे नियोक्ष्यति ॥९६॥
दशवर्षसहस्राणि दशवर्षशतानि च । रामो राज्यमुपासित्वा ब्रह्मलोकं प्रयास्यति ॥९७॥
इदं पवित्रं पापघ्नं पुण्यं वेदैश्च सम्मितम् । यः पठेद् रामचरितं सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥९८॥
एतदाख्यानमायुष्यं पठन् रामायणं नरः । सपुत्रपौत्रः सगणः प्रेत्य स्वर्गे महीयते ॥९९॥
पठन् द्विजो वागृषभत्वमीयात् स्यात् क्षत्रियो भूमिपतित्वमीयात् ।
वणिग्जनः पण्यफलत्वमीयाज्जनश्च शूद्रोऽपि महत्त्वमीयात् ॥१००॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे प्रथमः सर्गः ॥ १ ॥

(During the reign of Śrī Rāma) people will be positively much delighted and cheerful, contented and well-fed, exceedingly pious, free from mental agony and bodily ailments and rid of (the scourge of) famine and fear (of theft etc.). (90) Nowhere will any men witness the death of their son or daughter, women will never be widows and will be ever devoted to their husband. (91) There will be no fear from fire nor will living beings be drowned in water. There will be no fear from wind nor any fear of fever. (92) Nor will there be fear of starvation in his kingdom nor that of thieves. Nay, cities and states will be full of riches and food-grains. (93) All will be ever extremely happy as in Satyayuga. Having propitiated the Lord through hundreds of horse-sacrifices and (other) sacrifices involving the use of abundant gold, (nay) bestowed with due ceremony a billion cows on the learned and given away untold riches to the Brahmans, the highly renowned Rāma will establish royal dynasties a hundred times more prosperous than before (by not only recognizing and confirming their sovereignty but even by liberally subsidizing them). Nay, he will direct the people belonging to (all) the four grades of society to follow their respective duties on this terrestrial plane. (94—96) Having served his kingdom for eleven thousand years, Śrī Rāma will ascend to Brahmaloka (the highest heaven). (97) He who reads this sacred narrative of Śrī Rāma, which is capable of purifying the mind and wiping out sins and is treated on a par with the Vedas, is completely absolved from all sins. (98) Reading this narrative centring round Śrī Rāma and conducive to longevity, a man shall on departing from this world be honoured in heaven along with his sons and grandsons as well as his followers and attendants. (99) Reading it a Brahman bids fair to attain eminence in eloquence; if he is a Kṣatriya, he is sure to attain lordship over the earth; a man belonging to the mercantile community is sure to secure profit in trade and a man belonging to the Śūdra class can hope to attain superiority (in his own class). (100)

Thus ends Canto One in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्वितीयः सर्गः

Canto II

Brahmā's visit

नारदस्य तु तद् वाक्यं श्रुत्वा वाक्यविशारदः । पूजयामास धर्मात्मा सहशिष्यो महामुनिम् ॥ १ ॥
यथावत् पूजितस्तेन देवर्षिर्नारदस्तदा । आपृच्छ्यैवाभ्यनुज्ञातः स जगाम विहायसम् ॥ २ ॥
स मुहूर्तं गते तस्मिन् देवलोकं मुनिस्तदा । जगाम तमसातीरं जाह्नव्यास्त्वविदूरतः ॥ ३ ॥
स तु तीरं समासाद्य तमसाया मुनिस्तदा । शिष्यमाह स्थितं पार्श्वे दृष्ट्वा तीर्थमकर्दमम् ॥ ४ ॥
अकर्दममिदं तीर्थं भरद्वाज निशामय । रमणीयं प्रसन्नाम्बु सन्मनुष्यमनो यथा ॥ ५ ॥
न्यस्यतां कलशस्तात दीयतां वल्कलं मम । इदमेवावगाहिष्ये तमसातीर्थमुत्तमम् ॥ ६ ॥
एवमुक्तो भरद्वाजो वाल्मीकेन महात्मना । प्रायच्छत मुनेस्तस्य वल्कलं नियतो गुरोः ॥ ७ ॥

Hearing the aforesaid discourse of Nārada, the pious sage (Vālmīki), a past master in expression, worshipped the eminent sage (Nārada) with his

(own) pupils. (1) Duly worshipped and permitted by him on asking leave, the aforesaid celestial seer, Nārada, forthwith rose to (his abode in) the heavens. (2) Having tarried (in his hermitage) awhile (*lit.*, for less than an hour) on the seer having left for heaven, the sage then repaired to the bank of the Tamasā not very far from the (holy) Gangā (obviously for his midday bath and devotions). (3) Duly reaching the bank of the Tamasā and finding the descent to the river free from mud, the sage then spoke to his pupil standing by his side (as follows):—(4) "Look at this descent, O Bharadwāja, (which is) free from mud and pleasant, its water being transparent as the mind of a righteous man. (5) Let your pitcher be laid (on the bank), O dear one.! and the bark be handed over to me (for being wrapped about my loins when I have bathed). I shall take my dip at this very descent of the Tamasā, excellent as it is." (6) Enjoined thus by the high-souled Vālmiki, Bharadwāja handed over the bark to the aforesaid sage, devoted as he was to his teacher. (7)

स शिष्यहस्तादादाय वल्कलं नियतेन्द्रियः । विचचार ह पश्यंस्तत् सर्वतो विपुलं वनम् ॥ ८ ॥
तस्याभ्याशे तु मिथुनं चरन्तमनपायिनम् । ददर्श भगवांस्तत्र क्रौञ्चयोश्चारुनिःस्वनम् ॥ ९ ॥
तस्मात् तु मिथुनादेकं पुमांसं पापनिश्चयः । जघान वैरनिलयो निषादस्तस्य पश्यतः ॥१०॥
तं शोणितपरीताङ्गं चेष्टमानं महीतले । भार्या तु निहतं दृष्ट्वा रुराव करुणां गिरम् ॥११॥
वियुक्ता पतिना तेन द्विजेन सहचारिणा । ताम्रशीर्षेण मत्तेन पत्त्रिणा सहितेन वै ॥१२॥

Taking the bark from the hand of his pupil, the sage, who had fully controlled his senses (and as such had no inclination to see anything delightful to the senses), sauntered about, they say, surveying the extensive forest on all sides. (8) Close to that descent the glorious sage actually perceived in that forest a pair of cranes moving about, never parting from one another and making a charming noise. (9) A Niṣāda (a member of a wild tribe living on hunting) of sinful resolve and full of animosity (even towards innocent creatures) struck (with an arrow) one of the said pair, the male bird, (even) while the sage looked on. (10) Seeing it mortally wounded and tossing about on the ground with its limbs smeared all over with blood, the female bird naturally gave out a pitcous wail, parted as she was from her mate and companion, the aforesaid bird, that was endowed with a coppery crest, was inflamed with passion, (nay,) sexually united with her and (as such) had distended its wings. (11-12)

तथाविधं द्विजं दृष्ट्वा निषादेन निपातितम् । ऋषेर्धर्मात्मनस्तस्य कारुण्यं समपद्यत ॥१३॥
ततः करुणवेदित्वादधर्मोऽयमिति द्विजः । निशाम्य रुदतीं क्रौञ्चीमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१४॥
मा निषाद प्रतिष्ठां त्वमगमः शाश्वतीः समाः । यत् क्रौञ्चमिथुनादेकमवधीः काममोहितम् ॥१५॥
तस्येत्थं ब्रुवतश्चिन्ता बभूव हृदि वीक्षतः । शोकार्तेनास्य शकुनेः किमिदं व्याहृतं मया ॥१६॥
चिन्तयन् स महाप्राज्ञश्चकार मतिमान् मतिम् । शिष्यं चैवाब्रवीद् वाक्यमिदं स मुनिपुंगवः ॥१७॥
पादबद्धोऽक्षरसमस्तन्त्रीलयसमन्वितः । शोकार्तस्य प्रवृत्तो मे श्लोको भवतु नान्यथा ॥१८॥
शिष्यस्तु तस्य ब्रुवतो मुनेर्वाक्यमनुत्तमम् । प्रतिजग्राह संतुष्टस्तस्य तुष्टोऽभवन्मुनिः ॥१९॥

On seeing the bird struck down by the fowler in that state (of copulation) pity was aroused in the heart of that pious seer. (13) (Further) seized with compassion to behold the shrieking female bird and considering the fowler's act to be sinful, the sage addressed the following words (to the former):—(14) "May you not have peace of mind for endless years, O fowler, since you killed one of the pair of cranes, infatuated with passion." (15) (Even) as he was speaking in this strain, and (then) reflected: "What is it that has been uttered by me, tormented as I was with grief for this bird", uneasiness appeared in his heart. (16) Brooding awhile, the sage, who was highly learned and full of wisdom, made up his mind and the said chief of the sages addressed the following words to his pupil (Bharadwāja):—(17) "Let this utterance made by me while I was stricken with grief, (nay) set in four metrical feet, each containing an equal number of letters (*viz*, eight) and possessing the rhythm of a song that can be sung to a lute, be accepted as (real) poetry and not otherwise." (18) Even as the aforesaid sage uttered the couplet, unexcelled as it was (in that it was suggestive of the entire theme of the Rāmāyaṇa), his pupil, highly delighted, actually committed it to memory. The sage (thereupon) felt (much) pleased with him. (19)

सोऽभिषेकं ततः कृत्वा तीर्थे तस्मिन् यथाविधि । तमेव चिन्तयन्नर्थमुपावर्तत वै मुनिः ॥२०॥
भरद्वाजस्ततः शिष्यो विनीतः श्रुतवान् गुरोः । कलशं पूर्णमादाय पृष्ठतोऽनुजगाम ह ॥२१॥
स प्रविश्याश्रमपदं शिष्येण सह धर्मवित् । उपविष्टः कथाश्चान्याश्चकार ध्यानमास्थितः ॥२२॥
आजगाम ततो ब्रह्मा लोककर्ता स्वयं प्रभुः । चतुर्मुखो महातेजा द्रष्टुं तं मुनिपुंगवम् ॥२३॥
वाल्मीकिरथ तं दृष्ट्वा सहसोत्थाय वाग्यतः । प्राञ्जलिः प्रयतो भूत्वा तस्थौ परमविस्मितः ॥२४॥
पूजयामास तं देवं पाद्यार्घ्यासनवन्दनैः । प्रणम्य विधिवच्चैनं पृष्ट्वा चैव निरामयम् ॥२५॥
अथोपविश्य भगवानासने परमार्चिते । वाल्मीकये च ऋषये संदिदेशासनं ततः ॥२६॥
ब्रह्मणा समनुज्ञातः सोऽप्युपाविशदासने । उपविष्टे तदा तस्मिन् साक्षाल्लोकपितामहे ॥२७॥
तद्गतेनैव मनसा वाल्मीकिर्ध्यानमास्थितः । पापात्मना कृतं कष्टं वैरग्रहणबुद्धिना ॥२८॥
यत् तादृशं चारुरवं क्रौञ्चं हन्यादकारणात् । शोचन्नेव पुनः क्रौञ्चीमुपा श्लोकमिमं जगौ ॥२९॥
पुनरन्तर्गतमना भूत्वा शोकपरायणः ।

Having finished his (midday) ablution with due ceremony in that descent (of the holy Tamasā), the sage then returned (to his hermitage), brooding over the same incident as a matter of fact. (20) Taking the pitcher filled with water, his submissive and learned pupil, Bharadwāja, (too), they, say, thereupon followed in the wake of his teacher. (21) Reaching the grounds of the hermitage along with his pupil, the sage, who knew what is right, sat down and talked on (various) other topics, while (remaining) absorbed in contemplation (of the couplet uttered by him). (22) Then appeared the almighty Brahmā, the four-faced creator of the (fourteen) worlds, (who was) possessed of great splendour, personally to see Vālmīki (the chief of hermits). (23) Greatly astonished to see him, Vālmīki forthwith rose in haste (from his seat) and stood tongue-tied with joined palms in great humility. (24) Bowing low to him according to the scriptural ordinance and inquiring after his welfare too, the sage worshipped the aforesaid deity by offering water to wash his feet and hands with as well as a (high) seat and bestowing encomiums on him. (25) Making himself comfortable on the most exalted seat (offered by Vālmīki), the almighty creator, who was covered all over by his own effulgence, forthwith directed the sage Vālmīki to take his seat. (26) Duly permitted by Brahmā, Vālmīki too made himself comfortable on his seat. Even though Brahmā, the progenitor of the (entire) creation, was directly seated (before him) at that time, Vālmīki remained absorbed in reveric with his mind fixed on that (very) incident. (He said to himself,) "A great wrong was perpetrated by the wicked fowler, who was bent upon catching the bird with malicious intent, in that he struck down without any fault the crane in that state cooing so delightfully !" Even while bewailing the lot of the female crane (disunited from its mate), he repeated the same couplet in the presence of Brahmā and, pondering over the meaning of the verse, fell a prey to grief once more (at the thought of his having unconsciously subjected the fowler to a curse and thereby thinned the stock of his askesis).

तमुवाच ततो ब्रह्मा प्रहसन् मुनिपुंगवम् ॥३०॥
श्लोक एवास्त्वयं बद्धो नात्र कार्या विचारणा । मच्छन्दादेव ते ब्रह्मन् प्रवृत्तेयं सरस्वती ॥३१॥
रामस्य चरितं कृत्स्नं कुरु त्वमृषिसत्तम । धर्मात्मनो भगवतो लोके रामस्य धीमतः ॥३२॥
वृत्तं कथय धीरस्य यथा ते नारदाच्छ्रुतम् । रहस्यं च प्रकाशं च यद् वृत्तं तस्य धीमतः ॥३३॥
रामस्य सहसौमित्रे राक्षसानां च सर्वशः । वैदेह्याश्चैव यद् वृत्तं प्रकाशं यदि वा रहः ॥३४॥
तच्चाप्यविदितं सर्वं विदितं ते भविष्यति । न ते वागनृता काव्ये काचिदत्र भविष्यति ॥३५॥
कुरु रामकथां पुण्यां श्लोकबद्धां मनोरमाम् । यावत् स्थास्यन्ति गिरयः सरितश्च महीतले ॥३६॥
तावद् रामायणकथा लोकेषु प्रचरिष्यति । यावद् रामस्य च कथा त्वत्कृता प्रचरिष्यति ॥३७॥
तावदूर्ध्वमधश्च त्वं मल्लोकेषु निवत्स्यसि ।
इत्युक्त्वा भगवान् ब्रह्मा तत्रैवान्तरधीयत । ततः सशिष्यो भगवान् मुनिर्विस्मयमाययौ ॥३८॥
तस्य शिष्यास्ततः सर्वे जगुः श्लोकमिमं पुनः । मुहुर्मुहुः प्रीयमाणाः प्राहुश्च भृशविस्मिताः ॥३९॥
समाक्षरैश्चतुर्भिर्यः पादैर्गीतो महर्षिणा । सोऽनुव्याहरणाद् भूयः शोकः श्लोकत्वमागतः ॥४०॥
तस्य बुद्धिरियं जाता महर्षेर्भावितात्मनः । कृत्स्नं रामायणं काव्यमीदृशैः करवाण्यहम् ॥४१॥
उदारवृत्तार्थपदैर्मनोरमैस्तदास्य रामस्य चकार कीर्तिमान् ।
समाक्षरैः श्लोकशतैर्यशस्विनो यशस्करं काव्यमुदारदर्शनः ॥४२॥
तदुपगतसमाससंधियोगं सममधुरोपनतार्थवाक्यबद्धम् ।
रघुवरचरितं मुनिप्रणीतं दशशिरसश्च वधं निशामयध्वम् ॥४३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे द्वितीयः सर्गः ॥ २ ॥

Brahmā then laughingly said to Vālmīki (the chief of the hermits):— (27-30) "Let this metrical composition be conducive to your glory alone. You need not brood over this (any more). Through my will alone has this speech flowed from your lips, O Brahman sage ! (31) Describe, O jewel among seers, the whole life on this earth of Lord Śrī Rāma, whose mind is (ever) given to piety and who is full of wisdom. (32) Tell the story of that hero as heard by you from the lips of Nārada. Whatever account, unknown or known, there is of the all-wise Śrī Rāma, as well as of Lakṣmaṇa (the son of Sumitrā), nay, of all the Rākṣasas (who fought with and were killed by him) and whatever account, known or unknown, there is of Sītā (the foster-daughter of Janaka), all that will be revealed to you even though unknown (at present). No description of yours in this poem (that will be composed by you) will prove false. (33—35) Render the sacred and soul-ravishing story of Śrī Rāma into (similar) verses. The theme of the Rāmāyaṇa will (continue to) be popular in (all) the (three) worlds so long as mountains and rivers will remain on the surface of the earth. And you will abide (both) higher up (in the heavenly regions) and below (on earth according to your choice) in the worlds of my creation so long as the narrative of Śrī Rāma composed by you will remain current." Saying so, the almighty Brahmā went out of sight on the very spot. Thereupon the glorious sage (Vālmīki) was filled with wonder along with his pupils (Bharadwāja and others). (36—38) Then all his pupils repeated the aforesaid verse (uttered by their teacher) and, getting delighted again and again, spoke (to one another as follows), greatly astonished (at the honour conferred on their teacher by the creator himself by calling on him of his own accord):—(39) "What was uttered by the great sage (Vālmīki) in four feet consisting of an equal number of syllables was (nothing but) his grief converted into a verse because of its being voiced by him." (40.) The thought occurred to the great sage of purified mind that he should compose the entire poem of the Rāmāyaṇa in such verses (similar to the one already uttered by him out of grief). (41) The illustrious sage, endowed (as he was) with a catholic outlook, then composed in hundreds (thousands) of soul-ravishing verses with their feet comprising an even number of syllables and consisting of words depicting the noble deeds of the glorious Śrī Rāma, a poem which has brought (great) renown to him. (42) Hear (O devout souls !) the story of the Chief of the Raghus, composed by the sage (Vālmīki) and culminating in the destruction of Rāvaṇa (the ten-headed monster),—the story in which compounds, the conjunction of letters and the combination of root words with their suffixes etc. figure in their proper places and which is made up of expressions of uniform beauty, sweet to hear and marked with perspicuity. (43)

Thus ends Canto Two in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and oldest poem.

तृतीयः सर्गः

Canto III

A brief outline of the Rāmāyaṇa as given by the poet himself

श्रुत्वा वस्तु समग्रं तद् धर्मार्थसहितं हितम् । व्यक्तमन्वेषते भूयो यद् वृत्तं तस्य धीमतः ॥ १ ॥
उपस्पृश्योदकं सम्यङ्मुनिः स्थित्वा कृताञ्जलिः । प्राचीनाग्रेषु दर्भेषु धर्मेणान्वेषते गतिम् ॥ २ ॥
रामलक्ष्मणसीताभी राज्ञा दशरथेन च । सभार्येण सराष्ट्रेण यत् प्राप्तं तत्र तत्त्वतः ॥ ३ ॥
हसितं भाषितं चैव गतिर्यावच्च चेष्टितम् । तत् सर्वं धर्मवीर्येण यथावत् सम्प्रपश्यति ॥ ४ ॥
स्त्रीतृतीयेन च तथा यत् प्राप्तं चरता वने । सत्यसंधेन रामेण तत् सर्वं चान्ववेक्षत ॥ ५ ॥
ततः पश्यति धर्मात्मा तत् सर्वं योगमास्थितः । पुरा यत् तत्र निर्वृत्तं पाणावामलकं यथा ॥ ६ ॥
तत् सर्वं तत्त्वतो दृष्ट्वा धर्मेण स महामतिः । अभिरामस्य रामस्य तत् सर्वं कर्तुमुद्यतः ॥ ७ ॥
कामार्थगुणसंयुक्तं धर्मार्थगुणविस्तरम् । समुद्रमिव रत्नाढ्यं सर्वश्रुतिमनोहरम् ॥ ८ ॥
स यथा कथितं पूर्वं नारदेन महात्मना । रघुवंशस्य चरितं चकार भगवान् मुनिः ॥ ९ ॥

Having heard (from Nārada as aforesaid) the entire theme (of the poem to be composed by him), promising religious merit and (worldly) prosperity (to its readers and hearers) and conferring (supreme) benefit (in the shape of final beatitude), Vālmīki sought to discover directly (through intuition) a detailed

(life-) account of that sagacious prince. (1) Sipping water (as a purificatory rite) according to the scriptural ordinance and taking his seat with joined palms on the blades of Kuśa grass with their ends pointing to the east, the sage sought to discover the exploits of Śrī Rāma through yogic power (conferred on him by Brahmā). (2) By dint of that yogic power he was able to perceive directly and clearly in reality and every detail in that state (of absorption) all that pertained to Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā as well as to Emperor Daśaratha along with his wives and kingdom—how they laughed and talked and moved and whatever they did. (3-4) Likewise he further directly perceived in order of sequence all that was enacted by Śrī Rāma, while roaming about in the forests in the company of Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā (his spouse), true to his promise. (5) Absorbed in deep meditation, that pious sage thereby saw, (as clearly) as, one would see a myrobalan placed in one's palm, all that had happened in the past (in relation to Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā as well as that which still awaited them). (6) Having seen all that in reality by dint of yogic power, Vālmīki, who was possessed of great wisdom, girded up his loins to render into verse the whole story of Śrī Rāma, the delighter of all. (7) The glorious sage Vālmīki composed (in verse), as it was told before by the high-souled Nārada, the story of Śrī Rāma (descended in the line of Raghu) which discusses in a secondary way the subjects of Kāma (sense-enjoyment) and (worldly) prosperity and expatiates on the merits of the two other objects of human pursuit, *viz*, piety and final beatitude, and is (thus) full of jewels like the ocean and attracts the ears as well as the mind of all (by the musical ring of its verses and the profundity of their meaning respectively). (8-9)

जन्म रामस्य सुमहद् वीर्यं सर्वानुकूलताम् । लोकस्य प्रियतां क्षान्तिं सौम्यतां सत्यशीलताम् ॥१०॥
नाना चित्राः कथाश्चान्या विश्वामित्रसहायने । जानक्याश्च विवाहं च धनुषश्च विभेदनम् ॥११॥
रामरामविवादं च गुणान् दाशरथेस्तथा । तथाभिषेकं रामस्य कैकेय्या दुष्टभावताम् ॥१२॥
विघातं चाभिषेकस्य रामस्य च विवासनम् । राज्ञः शोकं विलापं च परलोकस्य चाश्रयम् ॥१३॥
प्रकृतीनां विषादं च प्रकृतीनां विसर्जनम् । निषादाधिपसंवादं सूतोपावर्तनं तथा ॥१४॥

The advent of Śrī Rāma, his superlative prowess, benevolence to all, universal popularity, forgiveness, amiability and habit of speaking the truth; (10) many other wondrous episodes (*e. g.*, the one relating to the descent of the holy Ganga) told (by Viśwāmitra) in the course of his journey with the sage Viśwāmitra (first to the latter's hermitage and then to Mithilā in order to attend the selection of a husband by the princess of Mithilā in an assembly of suitors); his breaking the bow (kept by the king of Mithilā in an arena in order to test the suitors' prowess), and the wedding of Sītā (Janaka's daughter) and others (Ūrmilā and so on); (11) the controversy between Śrī Rāma and Paraśurāma (over the breaking of the bow); (a description of) the (extraordinary) virtues of Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha); preparations for Śrī Rāma's installation (as the regent of Ayodhya) and the malignity of Kaikeyī; (12) interruption of the installation (caused by Kaikeyī) and Śrī Rāma's exile (to the forest); the king's grief and lament and (eventual) departure to the other world; (13) the grief of the people (of Ayodhya) and how those who followed him to the forest were made to return (by being put off the scent); his dialogue with the chief of the Niṣādas and how the charioteer (who took Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa in a chariot to the forest under the king's command) was sent back (by Śrī Rām after his meeting with the Niṣāda chief); (14)

गङ्गायाश्चापि संतारं भरद्वाजस्य दर्शनम् । भरद्वाजाभ्यनुज्ञानाच्चित्रकूटस्य दर्शनम् ॥१५॥
वास्तुकर्म निवेशं च भरतागमनं तथा । प्रसादनं च रामस्य पितुश्च सलिलक्रियाम् ॥१६॥
पादुकाग्र्याभिषेकं च नन्दिग्रामनिवासनम् ।

How he ferried across the Ganga and called on the sage Bharadwāja, and his visit to Chitrakoot with the latter's concurrence; (15) his erection of a (leaf-thatched) hut (at Chitrakoot) and taking up his residence there (along with his spouse and younger brother) and the arrival of Bharata and how he tried to persuade Śrī Rāma to return to Ayodhya (and accept his rightful heritage in the shape of the throne of Ayodhya) and how Śrī Rāma offered water to (the spirit of) his (deceased) father (as his last duty to the latter); (16) how Bharata installed (on the throne of Ayodhya as the representative of Śrī Rāma) the pre-eminent wooden sandals (that had the unique honour of being used by the divine Śrī Rāma and had been given by the latter to Bharata as a token of his affection and regard for his younger brother) and took up his residence at Nandigrāma (now a lonely retreat fourteen miles away from Ayodhya);

दण्डकारण्यगमनं विराधस्य वधं तथा ॥१७॥
दर्शनं शरभङ्गस्य सुतीक्ष्णेन समागमम् । अनसूयासमास्यां च अङ्गरागस्य चार्पणम् ॥१८॥
दर्शनं चाप्यगस्त्यस्य धनुषो ग्रहणं तथा । शूर्पणख्याश्च संवादं विरूपकरणं तथा ॥१९॥
वधं खरत्रिशिरसोरुत्थानं रावणस्य च । मारीचस्य वधं चैव वैदेह्या हरणं तथा ॥२०॥
राघवस्य विलापं च गृध्रराजनिबर्हणम् । कबन्धदर्शनं चैव पम्पायाश्चापि दर्शनम् ॥२१॥
शबरीदर्शनं चैव फलमूलाशनं तथा ।

His departure to the forest of Daṇḍaka (for fear of being troubled every now and then by the people of Ayodhya now that they had come to know of his being there) and killing (the ogre) Virādha; (17) his visit to the sage Śarabhanga and meeting with Sutīkṣṇa (a pupil of the illustrious Agastya); Sītā's sojourn with Anasūyā (the wife of the great sage Atri) and the latter's offering sandal-paste etc. (to the former as a token of goodwill); (18) his visit to the sage Agastya and worship by the latter; his accepting a bow (belonging to Lord Viṣṇu and presented by the sage considering him to be eminently fit to receive and wield it especially in his future conflict with Rāvaṇa); Śūrpaṇakhā's overtures (for marriage to Śrī Rāma) and her disfigurement (at the hands of Lakṣmaṇa, who lopped off her ears and nose with a sword); (19) the destruction of the ogres Khara and Triśirā (as well as of Dūsaṇa and others) and Rāvaṇa's endeavour to carry off Sītā; the destruction of Mārīcha (disguised as a golden deer) by Śrī Rāma and the abduction (by Rāvaṇa) of Sītā (the daughter of King Janaka, nicknamed Videha); (20) Śrī Rāma's lament (over the disappearance of Sītā) and the death

(at Rāvaṇa's hands) of Jaṭāyu (the chief of the vultures); the sight of (and encounter with) Kabandha (a demon without head and legs and consisting of a mere trunk with long arms and a huge mouth in his belly, his head and thighs having been forced into his body by a blow from Indra's thunderbolt) as well as of the Pampā lake: (21) a visit to Śabarī (an ascetic woman) and partaking of fruits and roots (offered by her by way of hospitality);

प्रलापं चैव पम्पायां हनूमद्दर्शनं तथा ॥२२॥
ऋष्यमूकस्य गमनं सुग्रीवेण समागमम् । प्रत्ययोत्पादनं सख्यं वालिसुग्रीवविग्रहम् ॥२३॥
वालिप्रमथनं चैव सुग्रीवप्रतिपादनम् । ताराविलापं समयं वर्षरात्रनिवासनम् ॥२४॥
कोपं राघवसिंहस्य बलानामुपसंग्रहम् । दिशः प्रस्थापनं चैव पृथिव्याश्च निवेदनम् ॥२५॥
अङ्गुलीयकदानं च ऋक्षस्य बिलदर्शनम् । प्रायोपवेशनं चैव सम्पातेश्चापि दर्शनम् ॥२६॥

Śrī Rāma's raving (over the loss of his spouse) and his meeting with Hanumān on the brink of the Pampā lake; (22) his arrival at Mount Ṛṣyamūka (where the monkey chief Sugrīva was encamping in fear of his elder brother, Vālī, by whom he had been exiled and robbed even of his wife) and meeting with Sugrīva; his inspiring confidence in the heart of Sugrīva (by kicking the skeleton of the demon Dundubhi to a long distance and piercing with one arrow as many as seven palmyra trees standing in a row) and friendship with him; the combat between Vālī and Sugrīva; (23) the destruction of Vālī and the installation of Sugrīva (on the throne of Kiṣkindhā); the lament of Tārā (Vālī's widow); understanding with Sugrīva (that at the end of the monsoon messengers would be sent in all directions to trace the whereabouts of Sītā) and Śrī Rāma's sojourn (on Mount Ṛṣyamūka) during the days of the monsoon; (24) The (apparent) indignation (at the negligence of Sugrīva) of Śrī Rāma (a lion among the scions of Raghu) and Sugrīva's mustering forces (for being sent all round in quest of Sītā) and despatching teams of monkeys in all diretions and Sugrīva's description of (the various divisions and subdivisions of) the earth (for the information of the monkeys to be sent in search of Sītā); (25) Śrī Rāma's handing over his ring (to Hanumān); how the monkeys (sent in search of Sītā in a southerly direction under the leadership of Angada, the crown-prince of Kiṣkindhā) saw the cave of a bear and sat fasting unto death (on the sea-shore in a desparate mood on their failure to get any clue to the whereabouts of Sītā) and how they met Sampāti (the elder brother of Jaṭāyu); (26)

पर्वतारोहणं चैव सागरस्यापि लङ्घनम् । समुद्रवचनाच्चैव मैनाकस्य च दर्शनम् ॥२७॥
राक्षसीतर्जनं चैवच्छायाग्राहस्य दर्शनम् । सिंहिकायाश्च निधनं लङ्कामलयदर्शनम् ॥२८॥
रात्रौ लङ्काप्रवेशं च एकस्यापि विचिन्तनम् । आपानभूमिगमनमवरोधस्य दर्शनम् ॥२९॥
दर्शनं रावणस्यापि पुष्पकस्य च दर्शनम् । अशोकवनिकायानं सीतायाश्चापि दर्शनम् ॥३०॥
अभिज्ञानप्रदानं च सीतायाश्चापि भाषणम् । राक्षसीतर्जनं चैव त्रिजटास्वप्नदर्शनम् ॥३१॥
मणिप्रदानं सीताया वृक्षभङ्गं तथैव च । राक्षसीविद्रवं चैव किंकराणां निबर्हणम् ॥३२॥
ग्रहणं वायुसूनोश्च लङ्कादाहाभिगर्जनम् । प्रतिप्लवनमेवाथ मधूनां हरणं तथा ॥३३॥
राघवाश्वासनं चैव मणिनिर्यातनं तथा ।

How Hanumān climbed Mount Mahendra (in order to leap across the sea) and (eventually) crossed the ocean and how (again) he saw and talked with Mount Maināka (son of Himālaya) that had emerged (from the ocean) at the instance of the sea-god; (27) how he was threatened by Surasā (who came disguised as an ogress) and Lankinī (an ogress by her very birth) and how he saw and (eventually) brought about the death of the demoness Siṃhikā, who brought down flying birds by capturing their shadow, and saw the part of Mount Trikūṭa on which stood Lankā; (28) his entry into Lankā by night (to avoid detection by the enemy) and how he reflected all by himself (on his future plan); his visit to the ale-house and looking round the gynaeceum (of Rāvaṇa); (29) how he beheld Rāvaṇa as well as the Puṣpaka (his aerial car snatched from Kubera, the god of riches) and, reaching Aśokavana (a grove mainly consisting of Aśoka trees), had a look at Sītā; (30) his handing over the ring (of Śrī Rāma) to Sītā as a proof of his identity and Sītā's talk (with him); how she was threatened by the ogresses (appointed by Rāvaṇa to guard Sītā and bring her round) and how Trijaṭa (a daughter of Vibhīṣaṇa, also placed by her side) saw dreams (auguring well for Śrī Rāma); (31) how Sītā gave her own jewel (for the head to Hanumān as a proof of his having met her) and how the trees (of the grove) were destroyed (by Hanumān in order to convince Sītā of his extraordinary might and ability to liberate her from Rāvaṇa's captivity); the flight of the ogresses (guarding Sītā) and the destruction (by Hanumān) of the servants (of Rāvaṇa, guarding the grove); (32) the apprehension (by Rāvaṇa) of Hanumān (son of the wind-god) and how he roared while setting Lankā on fire; how he leapt back across the sea and he (and the other monkeys) forcibly partook (in exultation over the success of their mission) of the honey (collected in Madhuvana, setting at nought the guards of Sugrīva, to whom the garden belonged); (33) how Hanumān brought solace to Śrī Rāma (by telling him of his having seen Sītā) and handed over (to him) the jewel (given to him by Sītā);

संगमं च समुद्रेण नलसेतोश्च बन्धनम् ॥३४॥
प्रतारं च समुद्रस्य रात्रौ लङ्कावरोधनम् । विभीषणेन संसर्गं वधोपायनिवेदनम् ॥३५॥
कुम्भकर्णस्य निधनं मेघनादनिबर्हणम् । रावणस्य विनाशं च सीतावाप्तिमरेः पुरे ॥३६॥
विभीषणाभिषेकं च पुष्पकस्य च दर्शनम् । अयोध्यायाश्च गमनं भरद्वाजसमागमम् ॥३७॥
प्रेषणं वायुपुत्रस्य भरतेन समागमम् ।
रामाभिषेकाभ्युदयं सर्वसैन्यविसर्जनम् ।

(How Śrī Rāma set out on an expedition to Lankā along with Sugrīva and his huge army of monkeys to recover Sītā;) how they met the god presiding over the oceans (in person at the sea-shore) and how a bridge was built across the sea (with his concurrence) by the monkey chief Nala; (34) how the army crossed the sea (over the bridge so built) and besieged Lankā at night; the contact (of Śrī Rāma) with Vibhīṣaṇa (Rāvaṇa's youngest brother and a great devotee of Śrī Rāma) and how he told Śrī Rāma of the ways and means of killing Rāvaṇa and others; (35) the death of Kumbhakarṇa (the younger brother of Rāvaṇa); the destruction of Meghanāda (the eldest son of Rāvaṇa and the crown-prince of Lankā); the disposal of Rāvaṇa and the recovery of Sītā at the enemy's capital; (36) the installation of Vibhīsaṇa (on the throne) of Lankā; how Śrī Rāma saw Puṣpaka (the aerial car belonging to Rāvaṇa) and flew (in it) towards Ayodhya; his (landing at Prayag and) meeting with the sage Bharadwāja; (37) how Hanumān (son of the wind-god) was despatched (in advance to Ayodhya to meet Bharata and apprise him of Śrī Rāma's return) and the

(subsequent) meeting (of Śrī Rāma) with Bharata; the festivities connected with the coronation of Śrī Rāma and how the whole host of monkeys was (disbanded and) sent away (to their respective homes);

स्वराष्ट्ररञ्जनं चैव वैदेह्याश्च विसर्जनम् ॥३८॥
अनागतं च यत् किंचिद् रामस्य वसुधातले । तच्चकारोत्तरे काव्ये वाल्मीकिर्भगवानृषिः ॥३९॥
इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये मादिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे तृतीयः सर्गः ॥ ३ ॥

How Śrī Rāma won the heart of his people (by his loving rule) and exiled Sītā (the daughter of King Janaka, nicknamed Videha). (38) Nay, Vālmīki (also) described in his excellent poem whatever deeds were yet to be performed on earth by Śrī Rāma the glorious sage. (39)

Thus ends Canto Three in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुर्थः सर्गः

Canto IV

After his ascension to the throne of Ayodhya Śrī Rāma listens to his own story as sung by his sons (Kuśa, and Lava).

प्राप्तराज्यस्य रामस्य वाल्मीकिर्भगवानृषिः । चकार चरितं कृत्स्नं विचित्रपदमर्थवत् ॥ १ ॥
चतुर्विंशत्सहस्राणि श्लोकानामुक्तवानृषिः । तथा सर्गशतान् पञ्च षट् काण्डानि तथोत्तरम् ॥ २ ॥
कृत्वा तु तन्महाप्राज्ञः सभविष्यं सहोत्तरम् । चिन्तयामास को न्वेतत् प्रयुञ्जीयादिति प्रभुः ॥ ३ ॥
तस्य चिन्तयमानस्य महर्षेर्भावितात्मनः । अगृह्णीतां ततः पादौ मुनिवेषौ कुशीलवौ ॥ ४ ॥
कुशीलवौ तु धर्मज्ञौ राजपुत्रौ यशस्विनौ । भ्रातरौ स्वरसम्पन्नौ ददर्शाश्रमवासिनौ ॥ ५ ॥

The glorious sage Vālmīki composed a poem, consisting of marvellous expressions and full of excellent topics, depicting the whole life-story of Śrī Rāma, who had (since) regained his kingdom (after returning from the woods). (1) The sage uttered twenty-four thousand verses and made (out of them) six Kāṇḍas, consisting of five hundred (and odd) cantos, and an Uttara Kāṇḍa (the epilogue). (2) Having duly completed it along with the Uttara Kāṇḍa, dealing with the future events (of Śrī Rāma's life), the highly intelligent Vālmīki contemplated as to what man endowed with a powerful memory could possibly recite it (before audiences). (3) While that great seer of purified mind was pondering (as aforesaid), Kuśa and Lava (the two sons of Śrī Rāma, brought forth by Sītā during her exile at the hermitage of Vālmīki, by whom she had been given shelter and who had thus been the godfather of the two boys) presently appeared in the garb of hermits and caught hold of his feet (as a mark of respect) (4) Vālmīki cast a glance at Kuśa and Lava, the two co-uterine princes, who had been living (since their very birth) in his own hermitage (as his godsons and pupils), who knew their duty (towards their godfather and teacher) and had actually acquired (great) fame (by virtue of their devotion to the sage) and were (besides) gifted with a musical voice (and adepts in the science of music). (5)

स तु मेधाविनौ दृष्ट्वा वेदेषु परिनिष्ठितौ । वेदोपबृंहणार्थाय तावग्राहयत प्रभुः ॥ ६ ॥
काव्यं रामायणं कृत्स्नं सीतायाश्चरितं महत् । पौलस्त्यवधमित्येवं चकार चरितव्रतः ॥ ७ ॥
पाठ्ये गेये च मधुरं प्रमाणैस्त्रिभिरन्वितम् । जातिभिः सप्तभिर्युक्तं तन्त्रीलयसमन्वितम् ॥ ८ ॥
रसैः शृङ्गारकरुणहास्यवीरभयानकैः । रौद्रादिभिश्च संयुक्तं काव्यमेतदगायताम् ॥ ९ ॥
तौ तु गान्धर्वतत्त्वज्ञौ स्थानमूर्च्छनकोविदौ । भ्रातरौ स्वरसम्पन्नौ गन्धर्वाविव रूपिणौ ॥१०॥
रूपलक्षणसम्पन्नौ मधुरस्वरभाषिणौ । बिम्बादिवोत्थितौ बिम्बौ रामदेहात् तथापरौ ॥११॥
तौ राजपुत्रौ कार्त्स्न्येन धर्म्यमाख्यानमुत्तमम् । वाचोविधेयं तत् सर्वं कृत्वा काव्यमनिन्दितौ ॥१२॥
ऋषीणां च द्विजातीनां साधूनां च समागमे । यथोपदेशं तत्त्वज्ञौ जगतुः सुसमाहितौ ॥१३॥

Seeing the two boys endowed with exceptional talent and well-versed in the Vedas, the glorious sage, who had observed sacred vows (all his life and had thereby acquired the capacity to undertake this stupendous task), taught them, with the object of enlightening them on the meaning of the Vedas, the whole of the great poem of the Rāmāyaṇa, (mainly) consisting of the story of Sītā and entitled "Paulastya-Vadha" (an account of the death of Rāvaṇa, the grandson of Pulasti, a mind-born son of Brahmā). (6-7) The two boys chanted this poem, which was delightful to read and chant, could be adapted to the three measures of time (slow, medium and quick), could be sung to the lute with proper rhythm and in the seven notes of the gamut and was characterized by the (nine) sentiments of love, pathos, mirth, heroism, terror and wrath etc. (including disgust, wonder and serenity). (8-9) The two brothers were really masters of music, possessed knowledge of the (threefold) source of the modulations of the voice (*viz*, the lungs, the throat and the cerebrum) and also knew how to play upon the lute etc., had a sweet voice like the Gandharvas (celestial musicians) and were handsome too like them. (10) Endowed with physical charm and auspicious marks on their body, they spoke in a sweet strain and, like two images made from the original, they looked like two other Rāmas sprung from the loins of Śrī Rāma. (11) Having committed to memory the whole of that exquisite and historical poem (the Rāmāyaṇa), which was entirely devoted to virtue, the two irreproachable princes, who knew the real purport of the Vedas and other scriptures, chanted it (even) as they had been instructed, with their mind fully concentrated, in a concourse of seers, members of the twice-born classes and (other) pious men. (12-13)

महात्मानौ महाभागौ सर्वलक्षणलक्षितौ । तौ कदाचित् समेतानामृषीणां भावितात्मनाम् ॥१४॥
मध्येसभं समीपस्थाविदं काव्यमगायताम् । तच्छ्रुत्वा मुनयः सर्वे बाष्पपर्याकुलेक्षणाः ॥१५॥
साधु साध्विति तावूचुः परं विस्मयमागताः । ते प्रीतमनसः सर्वे मुनयो धर्मवत्सलाः ॥१६॥
प्रशशंसुः प्रशस्तव्यौ गायमानौ कुशीलवौ । अहो गीतस्य माधुर्यं श्लोकानां च विशेषतः ॥१७॥

On a certain day the two boys, who were exceptionally talented, highly blessed and equipped with all good qualities, chanted the poem in open assembly standing by the side of the assembled seers of purified mind. Seized with great wonder to hear it, the sages universally applauded them, saying "Well done! Excellent !!", their eyes bedimmed with tears. Delighted in mind, the sages, who were all virtue-loving, extolled (in the following words) both the singers, Kuśa and Lava, who deserved all praise:—"Wonderful is the melody of music, and particularly of (the recitation of) the verses! (14—17)

चिरनिर्वृत्तमप्येतत् प्रत्यक्षमिव दर्शितम् । प्रविश्य तावुभौ सुष्ठु तथाभावमगायताम् ॥१८॥
सहितौ मधुरं रक्तं सम्पन्नं स्वरसम्पदा । एवं प्रशस्यमानौ तौ तपःश्लाघ्यैर्महर्षिभिः ॥१९॥
संरक्ततरमत्यर्थं मधुरं तावगायताम् । प्रीतः कश्चिन्मुनिस्ताभ्यां संस्थितः कलशं ददौ ॥२०॥
प्रसन्नो वल्कलं कश्चिद् ददौ ताभ्यां महायशाः । अन्यः कृष्णाजिनमदाद् यज्ञसूत्रं तथापरः ॥२१॥
कश्चित् कमण्डलुं प्रादान्मौञ्जीमन्यो महामुनिः । बृसीमन्यस्तदा प्रादात् कौपीनमपरो मुनिः ॥२२॥
ताभ्यां ददौ तदा हृष्टः कुठारमपरो मुनिः । काषायमपरो वस्त्रं चीरमन्यो ददौ मुनिः ॥२३॥
जटाबन्धनमन्यस्तु काष्ठरज्जुं मुदान्वितः । यज्ञभाण्डमृषिः कश्चित् काष्ठभारं तथापरः ॥२४॥
औदुम्बरीं बृसीमन्यः स्वस्ति केचित् तदावदन् । आयुष्यमपरे प्राहुर्मुदा तत्र महर्षयः ॥२५॥
ददुश्चैवं वरान् सर्वे मुनयः सत्यवादिनः । आश्चर्यमिदमाख्यानं मुनिना सम्प्रकीर्तितम् ॥२६॥

"Though the events took place long ago, the picture has been vividly placed before the eye as though it belonged to the present. Having entered into the spirit of the poem, the two princes chanted it with one voice exquisitely in a sweet loving tone and with all the richness of music!" Being applauded thus by eminent seers deserving of praise for their asceticism, the two boys sang all the more sweetly and with deeper emotion. Pleased with them and getting up (as a mark of admiration) a certain sage presented to them a pitcher. (18—20) Full of delight, a certain sage, who had earned great fame (for his proficiency in the science of music) gave them the bark of a tree (for being used as a loin-cloth). Another gave them the skin of a black deer and still another a sacred thread (for being worn baldric wise). (21) A certain sage gave them a Kamaṇḍalu (a drinking-vessel made of a wild cocoanut), while another great sage gave them a girdle of Muñba grass. Yet another gave them on the said occasion a Kuśa mat (worthy of sages), while still another gave them a strip of cloth for covering the privities with. (22) Full of joy another hermit gave them on that occasion a hatchet (for cutting wood); another, a piece of brown-red cloth (generally used by Brahmachārīs and recluses); while still another hermit gave them a scarf. (23) Full of joy yet another gave them a string for binding one's matted hair and a cord for tying together a bundle of pieces of wood. A certain seer gave them a sacrificial vessel, while another gave them a faggot. (24) Yet another gave them a wooden seat made out of an Udumbara tree, while some invoked blessings (on them) on that occasion. Full of joy other great seers (present) there blessed them with long life. (25) In this way the sages (present in that assembly), who all (habitually) spoke the truth, bestowed boons (on the two princes) and said, "Wonderful is this narrative exquisitely told at length by the sage (Vālmīki). (26)

परं कवीनामाधारं समाप्तं च यथाक्रमम् । अभिगीतमिदं गीतं सर्वगीतिषु कोविदौ ॥२७॥
आयुष्यं पुष्टिजननं सर्वश्रुतिमनोहरम् । प्रशस्यमानौ सर्वत्र कदाचित् तत्र गायकौ ॥२८॥
रथ्यासु राजमार्गेषु ददर्श भरताग्रजः । स्ववेश्म चानीय ततो भ्रातरौ स कुशीलवौ ॥२९॥
पूजयामास पूजार्हौ रामः शत्रुनिबर्हणः । आसीनः काञ्चने दिव्ये स च सिंहासने प्रभुः ॥३०॥
उपोपविष्टैः सचिवैर्भ्रातृभिश्च समन्वितः । दृष्ट्वा तु रूपसम्पन्नौ विनीतौ भ्रातरावुभौ ॥३१॥

उवाच लक्ष्मणं रामः शत्रुघ्नं भरतं तथा । श्रूयतामेतदाख्यानमनयोर्देववर्चसोः ॥३२॥
विचित्रार्थपदं सम्यग् गायकौ समचोदयत् । तौ चापि मधुरं रक्तं स्वचित्तायतनिःस्वनम् ॥३३॥
तन्त्रीलयवदत्यर्थं विश्रुतार्थमगायताम् ।
ह्लादयत् सर्वगात्राणि मनांसि हृदयानि च । श्रोत्राश्रयसुखं गेयं तद् बभौ जनसंसदि ॥३४॥
इमौ मुनी पार्थिवलक्षणान्वितौ कुशीलवौ चैव महातपस्विनौ ।
ममापि तद् भूतिकरं प्रचक्षते महानुभावं चरितं निबोधत ॥३५॥
ततस्तु तौ रामवचःप्रचोदितावगायतां मार्गविधानसम्पदा ।
स चापि रामः परिषद्गतः शनैर्बुभूषयाऽऽसक्तमना बभूव ॥३६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे चतुर्थः सर्गः ॥ ४ ॥

"It will serve as the chief support for (future) poets and has been concluded with due regard to the sequence of events. This song has been beautifully sung by you, O princes well-versed in all style of singing! (27) It is conducive to long life, begets prosperity and ravishes the ears and mind of all (who listen to it)." One day Śrī Rāma (the elder brother of Bharata) beheld the two singers roaming about (chanting the Rāmāyaṇa) in the lanes and streets of Ayodhya and being applauded everywhere. Bringing the two brothers, Kuśa and Lava, to his own palace and offering them an exalted seat, the aforesaid Rāma, the destroyer of his foes, then (duly) entertained them, deserving of honour as they were. Seated on his celestial throne of gold and surrounded by his ministers as well as by his (own) brothers seated beside him, and casting a look at the two brothers, who were not only endowed with a charming appearance but modest too, the aforesaid King Rāma addressed Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna (as follows):—"Let this narrative couched in wonderful expressions and dealing with diverse topics, be carefully heard (by you) from the lips of these two boys possessing the splendour of gods." (At the same time) he urged the two singers (to commence their recitation). They too chanted the poem, whose theme was too well-known, in a melodious and lovable tone, sweet as the sound of a lute, (nays) raised to a pitch conformable to one's will and agreeable to the mind of the listeners. That song, which sent a thrill through all the limbs and gladdened the mind as well as the heart (of the listeners) and was delightful to the ear, made its mark in any gathering of men. (28—34) "These two singers," observed Śrī Rāma, "are endowed with the auspicious marks characteristic of rulers of the globe, though they are hermits and great ascetics (to all appearances). Listen to the story (sung by them), which is of great consequence (because of its numerous literary excellences and universal appeal) and the wise declare it as conducive even to my own well-being (here as well as hereafter)." (35) Urged by the words of Śrī Rāma, of course, the two boys then commenced the recitation in full accord with the Mārga* style of singing. The celebrated Rāma too, who had (by now) joined the assembly, gradually allowed his mind to be absorbed (in hearing the recitation) with intent to experience the joy welling from it. (36)

Thus ends Canto Four in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

---

*. Our Śāstras mention two styles of singing, the Mārga style and the Deśī style. The former is resorted to in singing songs in Sanskrit, while the latter is used in singing songs in the various Prākṛta dialects or vernaculars.

पञ्चमः सर्गः

Canto V

A description of the city of Ayodhya

सर्वापूर्वमियं येषामासीत् कृत्स्ना वसुंधरा । प्रजापतिमुपादाय नृपाणां जयशालिनाम् ॥ १ ॥
येषां स सगरो नाम सागरो येन खानितः । षष्टिपुत्रसहस्राणि यं यान्तं पर्यवारयन् ॥ २ ॥
इक्ष्वाकूणामिदं तेषां राज्ञां वंशे महात्मनाम् । महदुत्पन्नमाख्यानं रामायणमिति श्रुतम् ॥ ३ ॥
तदिदं वर्तयिष्यावः सर्वं निखिलमादितः । धर्मकामार्थसहितं श्रोतव्यमनसूयता ॥ ४ ॥

This entire globe has been the exclusive property of victorious kings commencing from Vaivaswata Manu (a lord of created beings) (1) In their line appeared the celebrated king, Sagara by name, by whom was hollowed out the ocean and whom, (even) as he went out (on an expedition to chastise his enemies), his sixty thousand sons followed. (2) This great story, known by the name of "Rāmāyaṇa", has its seeds in the line of the same high-souled kings tracing their descent from Ikṣwāku (the eldest son of Vaivaswata): so it is heard. (3) We two (Kuśa and Lava) shall (presently) sing from the (very) beginning in all its details the whole of this story, which is conducive to piety, worldly prosperity and sense-enjoyment along with Liberation. It should be heard by one who is free from a carping spirit. (4)

कोसलो नाम मुदितः स्फीतो जनपदो महान् । निविष्टः सरयूतीरे प्रभूतधनधान्यवान् ॥ ५ ॥
अयोध्या नाम नगरी तत्रासील्लोकविश्रुता । मनुना मानवेन्द्रेण या पुरी निर्मिता स्वयम् ॥ ६ ॥

There is a great principality, known by the name of Kosala, extending along the bank of the Sarayu. It is happy and prosperous, nay, full of abundant riches and plenty of food-grains. (5) In it stands comprised the world-renowned city, Ayodhya by name, a city which was built by dint of his own volition by Vaivaswata Manu, the ruler of mankind. (6)

आयता दश च द्वे च योजनानि महापुरी । श्रीमती त्रीणि विस्तीर्णा सुविभक्तमहापथा ॥ ७ ॥
राजमार्गेण महता सुविभक्तेन शोभिता । मुक्तपुष्पावकीर्णेन जलसिक्तेन नित्यशः ॥ ८ ॥
तां तु राजा दशरथो महाराष्ट्रविवर्धनः । पुरीमावासयामास दिवि देवपतिर्यथा ॥ ९ ॥
कपाटतोरणवतीं सुविभक्तान्तरापणाम् । सर्वयन्त्रायुधवतीमुषितां सर्वशिल्पिभिः ॥१०॥
सूतमागधसम्बाधां श्रीमतीमतुलप्रभाम् । उच्चाट्टालध्वजवतीं शतघ्नीशतसंकुलाम् ॥११॥
वधूनाटकसंघैश्च संयुक्तां सर्वतः पुरीम् । उद्यानाम्रवणोपेतां महतीं सालमेखलाम् ॥१२॥
दुर्गगम्भीरपरिखां दुर्गामन्यैर्दुरासदाम् । वाजिवारणसम्पूर्णां गोभिरुष्ट्रैः खरैस्तथा ॥१३॥
सामन्तराजसंघैश्च बलिकर्मभिरावृताम् । नानादेशनिवासैश्च वणिग्भिरुपशोभिताम् ॥१४॥
प्रासादै रत्नविकृतैः पर्वतैरिव शोभिताम् । कूटागारैश्च सम्पूर्णामिन्द्रस्येवामरावतीम् ॥१५॥
चित्रामष्टापदाकारां वरनारीगणायुताम् । सर्वरत्नसमाकीर्णां विमानगृहशोभिताम् ॥१६॥
गृहगाढामविच्छिद्रां समभूमौ निवेशिताम् । शालितण्डुलसम्पूर्णामिक्षुकाण्डरसोदकाम् ॥१७॥
दुन्दुभीभिर्मृदङ्गैश्च वीणाभिः पणवैस्तथा । नादितां भृशमत्यर्थं पृथिव्यां तामनुत्तमाम् ॥१८॥
विमानमिव सिद्धानां तपसाधिगतं दिवि । सुनिवेशितवेश्मान्तां नरोत्तमसमावृताम् ॥१९॥

ये च बाणैर्न विध्यन्ति विविक्तमपरापरम् । शब्दवेध्यं च विततं लघुहस्ता विशारदाः ॥२०॥
सिंहव्याघ्रवराहाणां मत्तानां नदतां वने । हन्तारो निशितैः शस्त्रैर्बलाद् बाहुबलैरपि ॥२१॥
तादृशानां सहस्रैस्तामभिपूर्णां महारथैः । पुरीमावासयामास राजा दशरथस्तदा ॥२२॥
तामग्निमद्भिर्गुणवद्भिरावृतां द्विजोत्तमैर्वेदषडङ्गपारगैः ।
सहस्रदैः सत्यरतैर्महात्मभिर्महर्षिकल्पैरृषिभिश्च केवलैः ॥२३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे पञ्चमः सर्गः ॥ ५ ॥

That great and glorious city with its well-aligned roads is twelve Yojanas (ninety-six miles) long and three Yojanas (twenty-four miles) wide. (7) It is graced with a beautifully ramified extensive highway, which is daily sprinkled (all along) with water and strewn with flowers dropped from the heavens (by celestial damsels who hover over the city to have a look at it and pay their homage to it). (8) King Daśaratha, who promoted his great kingdom to a pre-eminent degree (by virtue of his righteous and benevolent rule), really made the city more populous (even) as Indra (the ruler of the gods) adds to the population of his own capital (Amarāvatī) in heaven. (9) It has arched gateways with beautiful doors, is provided with well laid out markets and equipped with all sorts of catapults and weapons and is peopled by all classes of craftsmen. (10) Crowded with panegyrists and bards, it is prosperous and possessed of matchless splendour, is marked with tall attics and flags and equipped with numberless Śataghnīs (interpreted by some as a kind of rocket and by others as iron pikes). (11) The great city is enriched with troupes of female dancers on all sides and graced with orchards in the shape of mango groves and is enclosed by a defensive wall. (12) Encircled by a deep moat which cannot be easily entered or crossed, the city is difficult of access and cannot be easily approached (by enemies). It abounds in horses and elephants, cows, camels and donkeys. (13) It is (ever) thronged with crowds of feudatory princes that flock from all sides on the mission of paying their (annual) tribute, and is graced with (the presence of) traders inhabiting different countries. (14) Adorned with mountain-like mansions built of precious stones, and thickly set with attics, it looks like Indra's Amarāvatī. (15) Presenting a colourful appearance, it is laid out after the design of a dice-board, is thronged with bevies of lovely women and full of all varieties of precious stones, and is embellished with seven-storied buildings. (16) Thick with houses, it is faultless of design and has been built on a level ground, abounds in rice and contains water sweet as the sap of a sugar-cane. (17) Made deeply resonant with the sound of kettle-drums, clay tomtoms, lutes and drums, it is altogether unexcelled on the earth. (18) With its well-arranged houses it looks like a row of aerial cars in heaven belonging to Siddhas (a class of semi-divine beings naturally endowed with mystic powers) and attained through askesis, and is inhabited by jewels among men. (19) It is crowded on all sides with thousands of great car-warriors* who never strike with arrows an isolated warrior, one who has no father or son, one who (being out of sight) could only be struck with the help of his voice or who has fled from an encounter,—warriors who are not only skilled archers but also well-versed in the use of all kinds of arms, nay, who kill with violence by means of sharp-edged missiles and even with the might of arms (unaided by weapons) lions, tigers and boars furiously roaring in the woods. (20-21) It is such a city that King Daśaratha repopulated in those days—a city which is peopled by the foremost of Brahmans who maintain (and worship) the sacred fire, are adorned with good qualities, have mastered the Vedas as well as the (six) branches* of knowledge auxiliary to a study of the Vedas, by high-souled men who give away in abundance and are devoted to truth, as well as by eminent seers who are almost as good as Maharṣis. (22-23)

---

* A Mahāratha (a great car-warrior) has been defined in our scriptures as below:—

आत्मानं सारथिं चाश्वान् रक्षन् युध्येत यो नरः । स महारथसंज्ञः स्यात्………… ॥

"A man who is able to fight while defending himself, his charioteer and horses enjoys the title of a Mahāratha."

According to another definition a Mahāratha is he who is able to fight single-handed ten thousand archers—

एको दश सहस्राणि योधयेद् यस्तु धन्विनाम् ।

Thus ends Canto Five in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षष्ठः सर्गः

Canto VI

A description of the city of Ayodhya and the prosperity of its inhabitants during the reign of King Daśaratha

तस्यां पुर्यामयोध्यायां वेदवित् सर्वसंग्रहः । दीर्घदर्शी महातेजाः पौरजानपदप्रियः ॥ १ ॥
इक्ष्वाकूणामतिरथो यज्वा धर्मपरो वशी । महर्षिकल्पो राजर्षिस्त्रिषु लोकेषु विश्रुतः ॥ २ ॥
बलवान् निहतामित्रो मित्रवान् विजितेन्द्रियः । धनैश्च संचयैश्चान्यैः शक्रवैश्रवणोपमः ॥ ३ ॥
यथा मनुर्महातेजा लोकस्य परिरक्षिता । तथा दशरथो राजा लोकस्य परिरक्षिता ॥ ४ ॥
तेन सत्याभिसंधेन त्रिवर्गमनुतिष्ठता । पालिता सा पुरी श्रेष्ठा इन्द्रेणेवामरावती ॥ ५ ॥

While living in the city of Ayodhya, King Daśaratha protected his subjects. He was well-versed in the Vedas and collected all (useful) things. He was farsighted and highly glorious and was loved by the people inhabiting the city as well as the countryside. (1) He was a superlative car-hero (Atiratha)† of Ikṣwāku's race. He was fond of performing sacrifices, devoted to virtue and given to the control of his senses. He was a royal sage almost as good as a Maharṣi. He enjoyed a good reputation in all the three worlds. (2) He was strong and devoid of foes. He had a number of allies and was the conqueror of his senses.. In point of amassing wealth and other things he was a compeer of Indra and Kubera. (3) Just as the highly glorious Manu protected the whole world, so did King Daśaratha. (4) That king, who was true to his word and who was engaged in the pursuit of wealth, religious merit and sense-enjoyment protected the foremost city of Ayodhya, in the same way as Indra protected Amarāvatī. (5)

---

* The six branches of knowledge auxiliary to a study of the Vedas are:—(1) Śikṣā (Phonetics), (2) Vyākaraṇa (Grammar), (3) Chhandas (Prosody), (4) Nirukta (Etymology), (5) Jyautiṣa (Astronomy) and (6) Kalpa (which prescribes the ritual and gives rules for ceremonial or sacrificial acts).

† An Atiratha is he who fights a number of Mahārathas alone.

तस्मिन् पुरवरे हृष्टा धर्मात्मानो बहुश्रुताः । नरास्तुष्टा धनैः स्वैः स्वैरलुब्धाः सत्यवादिनः ॥ ६ ॥
नाल्पसंनिचयः कश्चिदासीत् तस्मिन् पुरोत्तमे । कुटुम्बी यो ह्यसिद्धार्थोऽगवाश्वधनधान्यवान् ॥ ७ ॥
कामी वा न कदर्यो वा नृशंसः पुरुषः क्वचित् । द्रष्टुं शक्यमयोध्यायां नाविद्वान् न च नास्तिकः ॥ ८ ॥
सर्वे नराश्च नार्यश्च धर्मशीलाः सुसंयताः । मुदिताः शीलवृत्ताभ्यां महर्षय इवामलाः ॥ ९ ॥
नाकुण्डली नामुकुटी नास्रग्वी नाल्पभोगवान् । नामृष्टो न नलिप्ताङ्गो नासुगन्धश्च विद्यते ॥१०॥
नामृष्टभोजी नादाता नाप्यनङ्गदनिष्कधृक् । नाहस्ताभरणो वापि दृश्यते नाप्यनात्मवान् ॥११॥
नानाहिताग्निर्नायज्वा न क्षुद्रो वा न तस्करः । कश्चिदासीदयोध्यायां न चावृत्तो न संकरः ॥१२॥
स्वकर्मनिरता नित्यं ब्राह्मणा विजितेन्द्रियाः । दानाध्ययनशीलाश्च संयताश्च प्रतिग्रहे ॥१३॥
नास्तिको नानृती वापि न कश्चिदबहुश्रुतः । नासूयको न चाशक्तो नाविद्वान् विद्यते क्वचित् ॥१४॥
नाषडङ्गविदत्रास्ति नाव्रतो नासहस्रदः । न दीनः क्षिप्तचित्तो वा व्यथितो वापि कश्चन ॥१५॥
कश्चिन्नरो वा नारी वा नाश्रीमान् नाप्यरूपवान् । द्रष्टुं शक्यमयोध्यायां नापि राजन्यभक्तिमान् ॥१६॥
वर्णेष्वग्र्यचतुर्थेषु देवतातिथिपूजकाः । कृतज्ञाश्च वदान्याश्च शूरा विक्रमसंयुताः ॥१७॥
दीर्घायुषो नराः सर्वे धर्मं सत्यं च संश्रिताः । सहिताः पुत्रपौत्रैश्च नित्यं स्त्रीभिः पुरोत्तमे ॥१८॥
क्षत्रं ब्रह्ममुखं चासीद् वैश्याः क्षत्रमनुव्रताः । शूद्राः स्वकर्मनिरतास्त्रीन् वर्णानुपचारिणः ॥१९॥

The people of that city are happy, virtuous, learned in sacred lore, free from greed, truthful and contented with their own fortune. (6) There is no householder in that great city who has not stored valuable things in abundance and has not attained the objects of human pursuit and who is in want of oxen, cows, horses and other wealth and food-grains. (7) There is no man to be seen in Ayodhya who is sensuous, miserly, cruel, ignorant and unbelieving. (8) All the men and women of that city are by nature virtuous, well-regulated in life, (always) cheerful and faultless in character and disposition like Maharṣis. (9) There is no one (in Ayodhya) who is devoid of (gold) ear-rings, diadem and flower-wreaths. Nobody lacks in objects of enjoyment. There is none who does not put on a smart appearance after taking bath. No one is there who does not smear his body with sandal-paste and does not use scents. (10) Nobody is seen (in Ayodhya) taking unholy food, not giving alms and not exercising control over his mind. No one is found there who has no (gold) bangles, a gold ornament for the neck and armlets on his person. (11) There is none in Ayodhya who does not maintain (and worship) the sacred fire and does not perform sacrifices; no one among them is petty-minded, given to thieving, immoral and impure of origin. (12) The Brahmans (inhabiting Ayodhya) are ever devoted to their duties and exercise effective control over their senses. They give away alms, pursue their studies and are chary of accepting gifts. (13) There is no member of the twice-born classes who is unbelieving, untruthful, devoid of knowledge of scriptures, busy finding fault with others, resourceless and bereft of learning. (14) There is no one in that city who has not mastered the six branches of knowledge auxiliary to a study of the Vedas and does not observe pious vows. There is no donor of scanty gifts and no miserable man. There is none who is either distracted in mind or afflicted. (15) There is no man or woman in Ayodhya who is devoid of splendour, not good-looking and not loyal to the king. (16) People belonging to (all) the four grades of society, with the Brahman as the foremost, are fond of worshipping the gods and unexpected visitors. They are grateful, generous, heroic and powerful. (17) All the residents of that great city enjoy a long lease of life and are devoted to virtue and truth, and as such are never deprived of their wives, sons, and grandsons. (18) The Kṣatriyas follow the lead of the Brahmans, the Vaiśyas are devoted to the Kṣatriyas and the Śūdras take delight in their own work while serving the other three Varṇas. (19)

सा तेनेक्ष्वाकुनाथेन पुरी सुपरिरक्षिता । यथा पुरस्तान्मनुना मानवेन्द्रेण धीमता ॥२०॥
योधानामग्निकल्पानां पेशलानाममर्षिणाम् । सम्पूर्णा कृतविद्यानां गुहा केसरिणामिव ॥२१॥
काम्बोजविषये जातैर्बाह्लीकैश्च हयोत्तमैः । वनायुजैर्नदीजैश्च पूर्णा हरिहयोत्तमैः ॥२२॥
विन्ध्यपर्वतजैर्मत्तैः पूर्णा हैमवतैरपि । मदान्वितैरतिबलैर्मातङ्गैः पर्वतोपमैः ॥२३॥
ऐरावतकुलीनैश्च महापद्मकुलैस्तथा । अञ्जनादपि निष्क्रान्तैर्वामनादपि च द्विपैः ॥२४॥
भद्रैर्मन्द्रैर्मृगैश्चैव भद्रमन्द्रमृगैस्तथा । भद्रमन्द्रैर्भद्रमृगैर्मृगमन्द्रैश्च सा पुरी ॥२५॥
नित्यमत्तैः सदा पूर्णा नागैरचलसंनिभैः ।
सा योजने द्वे च भूयः सत्यनामा प्रकाशते । यस्यां दशरथो राजा वसञ्जगदपालयत् ॥२६॥
तां पुरीं स महातेजा राजा दशरथो महान् । शशास शमितामित्रो नक्षत्राणीव चन्द्रमाः ॥२७॥
तां सत्यनामां दृढतोरणार्गलां गृहैर्विचित्रैरुपशोभितां शिवाम् ।
पुरीमयोध्यां नृसहस्रसंकुलां शशास वै शक्रसमो महीपतिः ॥२८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे षष्ठः सर्गः ॥ ६ ॥

King Daśaratha, the lord of the Ikṣwākus, fully protects Ayodhya on all sides in the same way as the wise Manu, the ruler of mankind, did in former times. (20) Like a cave full of lions, the city is thronged with warriors who have mastered the science of archery and are refulgent like fire, devoid of crookedness and unable to pocket insults. (21) It is crowded with horses of excellent breed born in the territories of Kamboja, Bāhlīka (Balkh) as well as in Vanāyu, river-horses (born in the Indus valley), horses that vie with the horse of god Indra (known by the name of Uchchaiḥśravā). (22) It is full of elephants in heat and mighty as mountains, born in the Vindhya and the Himalayan regions. (23) The city is (also) ever crowded with elephants belonging to the races of Airāvata, Mahāpadma, Añjana and Vāmana and those of the Bhadra, Mandra and Mṛga species (born on the Himalayas and Sahya range respectively), as well as with those (of cross-breeds) known by the names of Bhadra-Mandra-Mṛgas, Bhadra-Mandras, Bhadra-Mṛgas and Mṛga-Mandras, ever in rut and huge as mountains. Ayodhya (*lit.*, unassailable) bears a (really) significant name, particularly to a width of two Yojanas or sixteen miles (out of its total width of three Yojanas (twenty-four miles). While residing in this part of the city, King Daśaratha protected the world. (24—26) Just as the moon holds sway over the starry regions, similarly the said King Daśaratha, who was possessed of great glory and had destroyed (all) his enemies, ruled over the aforesaid city. (27) In this way the king, who vied with Indra, ruled over this blessed city of Ayodhya, which bears a significant name, is protected with strong gates and bars and graced with houses of various designs and teems with thousands of men. (28)

Thus ends Canto Six in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तमः सर्गः

Canto VII

The virtue and upright conduct of the eight ministers of Emperor Daśaratha

तस्यामात्या गुणैरासन्निक्ष्वाकोः सुमहात्मनः । मन्त्रज्ञाश्चेङ्गितज्ञाश्च नित्यं प्रियहिते रताः ॥ १ ॥
अष्टौ बभूवुर्वीरस्य तस्यामात्या यशस्विनः । शुचयश्चानुरक्ताश्च राजकृत्येषु नित्यशः ॥ २ ॥
धृष्टिर्जयन्तो विजयः सुराष्ट्रो राष्ट्रवर्धनः । अकोपो धर्मपालश्च सुमन्त्रश्चाष्टमोऽर्थवित् ॥ ३ ॥
ऋत्विजौ द्वावभिमतौ तस्यास्तामृषिसत्तमौ । वसिष्ठो वामदेवश्च मन्त्रिणश्च तथापरे ॥ ४ ॥
सुयज्ञोऽप्यथ जाबालिः काश्यपोऽप्यथ गौतमः । मार्कण्डेयस्तु दीर्घायुस्तथा कात्यायनो द्विजः ॥ ५ ॥
एतैर्ब्रह्मर्षिभिर्नित्यमृत्विजस्तस्य पौर्वकाः ।

The ministers of the exceptionally high-souled King Daśaratha (a scion of Ikṣwāku) knew how to weigh the pros and cons of a problem, could read the mind of others and were ever devoted to the welfare of their beloved master. (In short) they were endowed with (all) virtues (appropriate to a minister). (1) Eight* (in number) were the ministers of that heroic king, who were (all) glorious, pure (of mind and conduct) and ever devoted to the affairs of the king (state). (2) They were Ḍhṛṣṭi, Jayanta, Vijaya, Surāṣṭra, Rāṣṭravardhana, Akopa, Dharmapāla and Arthavit, Sumantra being the eighth. (3) Vasiṣṭha and Vāmadeva, the foremost of seers, were his two beloved family priests (and counsellors too). And there were other counsellors† too, *viz*, Suyajña and Jābāli, Kāśyapa (a scion of Kaśyapa) and Gautama, the long-lived Mārkaṇḍeya and the Brahman, Kātyāyana. (4-5) Along with these Brahman seers, his hereditary priests too ever functioned as his counsellors (also).

विद्याविनीता ह्रीमन्तः कुशला नियतेन्द्रियाः ॥ ६ ॥
श्रीमन्तश्च महात्मानः शस्त्रज्ञा दृढविक्रमाः । कीर्तिमन्तः प्रणिहिता यथावचनकारिणः ॥ ७ ॥
तेजःक्षमायशःप्राप्ताः स्मितपूर्वाभिभाषिणः । क्रोधात् कामार्थहेतोर्वा न ब्रूयुरनृतं वचः ॥ ८ ॥
तेषामविदितं किंचित् स्वेषु नास्ति परेषु वा । क्रियमाणं कृतं वापि चारेणापि चिकीर्षितम् ॥ ९ ॥
कुशला व्यवहारेषु सौहृदेषु परीक्षिताः । प्राप्तकालं यथा दण्डं धारयेयुः सुतेष्वपि ॥१०॥
कोशसंग्रहणे युक्ता बलस्य च परिग्रहे । अहितं चापि पुरुषं न हिंस्युरविदूषकम् ॥११॥
वीराश्च नियतोत्साहा राजशास्त्रमनुष्ठिताः । शुचीनां रक्षितारश्च नित्यं विषयवासिनाम् ॥१२॥
ब्रह्मक्षत्रमहिंसन्तस्ते कोशं समपूरयन् । सुतीक्ष्णदण्डाः सम्प्रेक्ष्य पुरुषस्य बलाबलम् ॥१३॥
शुचीनामेकबुद्धीनां सर्वेषां सम्प्रजानताम् । नासीत् पुरे वा राष्ट्रे वा मृषावादी नरः क्वचित् ॥१४॥
क्वचिन्न दुष्टस्तत्रासीत् परदाररतिर्नरः । प्रशान्तं सर्वमेवासीद् राष्ट्र पुरवरं च तत् ॥१५॥
सुवाससः सुवेषाश्च ते च सर्वे शुचिव्रताः । हितार्थाश्च नरेन्द्रस्य जाग्रतो नयचक्षुषा ॥१६॥

---

* Maun has enjoined a king to have seven or eight tried ministers :—मन्त्रिणः सप्त वाष्टौ वा प्रकुर्वीत परीक्षितान् ।

† A minister (Amātya) is believed to have been charged with executive duties, while a Mantri (counsellor) is supposed to have exercised judicial powers—अमात्या देशादिकार्यनिर्वाहका मन्त्रिणो व्यवहारद्रष्टारः ।

गुरोर्गुणगृहीताश्च प्रख्याताश्च पराक्रमैः । विदेशेष्वपि विज्ञाताः सर्वतो बुद्धिनिश्चयाः ॥१७॥
अभितो गुणवन्तश्च न चासन् गुणवर्जिताः । संधिविग्रहतत्त्वज्ञाः प्रकृत्या सम्पदान्विताः ॥१८॥
मन्त्रसंवरणे शक्ताः शक्ताः सूक्ष्मासु बुद्धिषु । नीतिशास्त्रविशेषज्ञाः सततं प्रियवादिनः ॥१९॥

The ministers were (all) modest through learning, bashful (by nature) and clever, had fully controlled their senses, were affluent, high-souled, well-versed in the use of weapons, possessed of unbending prowess, glorious, vigilant, true to their word, majestic, forgiving and far-famed. They spoke with a smile (ever) playing on their lips and would never tell a lie (even) in anger or for the sake of sense-enjoyment or wealth. (6—8) Nothing connected with their own people or with others was unknown to them; whatever was done or sought to be done by the people was known to them through spies. (9) They were (all) tactful in their dealings (with others), had been tried in the matter of loyalty, and meted out punishment even to their (own) sons (strictly) according to the law when occasion demanded it. (10) They were (ever) intent on swelling the state exchequer and consolidating the army and did not persecute even an enemy if he was not (found) guilty. (11) They were (great) heroes with an undying zeal (for warfare) and followed the precepts of political science; they protected under all circumstances the people of good conduct in their state. (12) They filled the coffers of the state without harassing the Brahman and the Kṣatriya communities and inflicted heavy penalties (of course) after duly considering the fat or slender resources* of the offender (and the gravity or otherwise of the offence committed by him). (13) As a result of the ministers being all upright (in their dealings), nay, of one mind and fully discerning, there was no man who told a lie any where in the city (of Ayodhya) or for that matter in the (entire) kingdom. (14) (Nay,) there was no wicked man or one having liaison with another's wife anywhere in that kingdom. (On the other hand) the whole state as well as the aforesaid city of Ayodhya (the foremost of all cities) was perfectly tranquil (free from turmoil or tribulation). (15) They were all finely dressed and well-adorned, and were of holy resolve; the welfare of the king (the state) was their (sole) purpose (in life) and they were (always) wide awake, seeing everything with the eye of prudence. (16) Favoured of the preceptor (of the king) because of their virtues and celebrated for (numerous) their prowess, they were universally recognized even in foreign lands, their conclusions being based on their (own) intellect. (17) They were qualified all round and were never devoid of virtues. They were conversant with the principles determining the propriety of peace and war and were naturally endowed with the divine properties. (18) They were capable of maintaining the secrecy of deliberations and (further) capable of subtle reasoning. They possessed a special knowledge of political science and always spoke kindly. (19)

ईदृशैस्तैरमात्यैश्च राजा दशरथोऽनघः । उपपन्नो गुणोपेतैरन्वशासद् वसुंधराम् ॥२०॥
अवेक्ष्यमाणश्चारेण प्रजा धर्मेण रक्षयन् । प्रजानां पालनं कुर्वन्नधर्मं परिवर्जयन् ॥२१॥

---

* Our scriptures say:—

देशकालवयःशक्तीः संचिन्त्या दण्डकर्मणि ।

"The time and place of punishment as well as the age and capacity of the convict should be taken into consideration while awarding punishment."

विश्रुतस्त्रिषु लोकेषु वदान्यः सत्यसंगरः । स तत्र पुरुषव्याघ्रः शशास पृथिवीमिमाम् ॥२२॥
नाध्यगच्छद्विशिष्टं वा तुल्यं वा शत्रुमात्मनः ।
मित्रवान् नतसामन्तः प्रतापहतकण्टकः । स शशास जगद् राजा दिवि देवपतिर्यथा ॥२३॥
तैर्मन्त्रिभिर्मन्त्रहिते निविष्टैर्वृतोऽनुरक्तैः कुशलैः समर्थैः ।
स पार्थिवो दीप्तिमवाप युक्तस्तेजोमयैर्गोभिरिवोदितोऽर्कः ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे सप्तमः सर्गः ॥ ७ ॥

Assisted by such qualified ministers, as mentioned above, and priests and counsellors, and free from (all) vices*, Emperor Daśaratha ruled over the (entire) globe. (20) Seeing everything with his eyes in the form of spies and protecting the people through righteousness, (nay) providing maintenance for his subjects and abstaining from unrighteousness, the said tiger among men, who was munificent and true to his promise and well-known (as such) in (all) the three worlds, ruled over this earth while residing in Ayodhya. (21-22) He never met an enemy, who could match, much less excel, him (in strength), and had a number of allies; the rulers of the adjoining territories bowed to him (accepted his suzerainty) and (all) his enemies were got rid of by his (very) glory. (In this way) the emperor ruled over the world (even) as Indra (the ruler of the gods) reigns (supreme) in heaven. (23) Surrounded by the aforesaid counsellors, who had been charged with the act of deliberation and were devoted to the interests of the state, (nay) who were clever and efficient and loyal to the king, the said monarch (Emperor Daśaratha) shone with splendour even as a rising sun shines bright when joined with its glorious rays. (24)

Thus ends Canto Seven in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

◆

---

* Lord Manu says:—

दश कामसमुत्थानि तथाष्टौ क्रोधजानि च । व्यसनानि दुरन्तानि प्रयत्नेन विवर्जयेत् ॥

"A monarch should scrupulously eschew the ten insurmountable vices born of lust and the eight born of anger."

The following are the ten vices born of lust:—

मृगयाक्षो दिवास्वापः परिवादः स्त्रियो मदः । तौर्यत्रिकं वृथाट्या च कामजो दशको गणः ॥

"Hunting, playing at dice, taking a nap during the day, slandering others, indulgence in women, inebriety, the three items of music (singing, dancing and playing upon musical instruments) and idly loitering about,—these are the ten vices born of lust."

The following eight constitute the vices born of anger:—

पैशुन्यं साहसं द्रोह ईर्ष्यासूयार्थदूषणे । वाग्दण्डनं च पारुष्यं क्रोधजोऽपि गणोऽष्टकः ॥

"Backbiting, rashness, malice, jealousy, prying into others' faults, unjust seizure of property, using abusive words and harsh speech—these are the eight vices born of anger."

अष्टमः सर्गः

Canto VIII

The king's proposal to perform a horse-sacrifice for being blessed with a son and the acclamation of the counsellors and other Brahmans

तस्य चैवंप्रभावस्य धर्मज्ञस्य महात्मनः । सुतार्थं तप्यमानस्य नासीद् वंशकरः सुतः ॥ १ ॥
चिन्तयानस्य तस्यैवं बुद्धिरासीन्महात्मनः । सुतार्थं वाजिमेधेन किमर्थं न यजाम्यहम् ॥ २ ॥
स निश्चितां मतिं कृत्वा यष्टव्यमिति बुद्धिमान् । मन्त्रिभिः सह धर्मात्मा सर्वैरपि कृतात्मभिः ॥ ३ ॥
ततोऽब्रवीन्महातेजाः सुमन्त्रं मन्त्रिसत्तम । शीघ्रमानय मे सर्वान् गुरूंस्तान् सपुरोहितान् ॥ ४ ॥
ततः सुमन्त्रस्त्वरितं गत्वा त्वरितविक्रमः । समानयत् स तान् सर्वान् समस्तान् वेदपारगान् ॥ ५ ॥
सुयज्ञं वामदेवं च जाबालिमथ काश्यपम् । पुरोहितं वसिष्ठं च ये चाप्यन्ये द्विजोत्तमाः ॥ ६ ॥
तान् पूजयित्वा धर्मात्मा राजा दशरथस्तदा । इदं धर्मार्थसहितं श्लक्ष्णं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ ७ ॥

There was no son to perpetuate the line of the magnanimous King Daśaratha, whose glory has been depicted above (in the foregoing canto) and who knew what is right, even though he had been grieving for want of a son. (1) While the high-souled king was reflecting (on the matter once), the following idea occurred to him:—"Why not propitiate the Deity by means of a horse-sacrifice in order to be blessed with a son?" (2) Having made a firm resolve in consultation with all his counsellors of pure intellect that a sacrifice must be performed, the wise king, whose mind was devoted to righteousness and who was possessed of uncommon glory, forthwith said to Sumantra, "O jewel among ministers, please fetch speedily all my celebrated preceptors including family priests." (3-4) Proceeding at once with quick steps, the said Sumantra thereupon brought together in a body the aforesaid preceptors, all of whom had mastered the Vedas. (5) Treating with honour Suyajña and Vāmadeva, Jābāli and Kāśyapa, the sage Vasiṣṭha, his family priest, and whoever other jewels among Brahmans were present there, the pious-minded King Daśaratha then spoke (to them) the following sweet words full of righteousness and purpose:—(6-7)

मम लालप्यमानस्य सुतार्थं नास्ति वै सुखम् । तदर्थं हयमेधेन यक्ष्यामीति मतिर्मम ॥ ८ ॥
तदहं यष्टुमिच्छामि शास्त्रदृष्टेन कर्मणा । कथं प्राप्स्याम्यहं कामं बुद्धिरत्र विचिन्त्यताम् ॥ ९ ॥
ततः साध्विति तद्वाक्यं ब्राह्मणाः प्रत्यपूजयन् । वसिष्ठप्रमुखाः सर्वे पार्थिवस्य मुखेरितम् ॥१०॥
ऊचुश्च परमप्रीताः सर्वे दशरथं वचः । सम्भाराः सम्भ्रियन्तां ते तुरगश्च विमुच्यताम् ॥११॥
सरय्वाश्चोत्तरे तीरे यज्ञभूमिर्विधीयताम् । सर्वथा प्राप्स्यसे पुत्रानभिप्रेतांश्च पार्थिव ॥१२॥
यस्य ते धार्मिकी बुद्धिरियं पुत्रार्थमागता ।

"Indeed there is no joy to me, who have been repeatedly wailing for a son (all these years). In order to be blessed with a son I shall propitiate the Lord through a horse-sacrifice: such is my intention. (8) I therefore wish to perform the aforesaid sacrifice according to the rites prescribed in the scriptures. How shall I (be able to) attain the object of my desire? A plan towards this end may kindly be devised (by you)." (9) Thereupon all the Brahmans headed by the sage Vasiṣtha acclaimed the aforesaid proposal put forth by the king with his own lips, in the words "Well conceived!" "Excellent!!" (10) Nay, highly pleased, they all tendered the following advice to Daśaratha:—"The well-known requisites (for the performance of a horse-sacrifice) may be got together and the horse (to be sacrificed) be released. (11) Also let a sacrificial ground be prepared on the northern bank of the Sarayu. (Through the contemplated sacrifice) you will at all events get sons* desired by you, O ruler of the earth,—you, to whom such a pious idea for getting a son has occurred."

ततस्तुष्टोऽभवद् राजा श्रुत्वैतद् द्विजभाषितम् ॥१३॥
अमात्यानब्रवीद् राजा हर्षव्याकुललोचनः । सम्भाराः सम्भ्रियन्तां मे गुरूणां वचनादिह ॥१४॥
समर्थाधिष्ठितश्चाश्वः सोपाध्यायो विमुच्यताम् । सरय्वाश्चोत्तरे तीरे यज्ञभूमिर्विधीयताम् ॥१५॥
शान्तयश्चापि वर्धन्तां यथाकल्पं यथाविधि । शक्यः प्राप्तुमयं यज्ञः सर्वेणापि महीक्षिता ॥१६॥
नापराधो भवेत् कष्टो यद्यस्मिन् क्रतुसत्तमे । छिद्रं हि मृगयन्ते स्म विद्वांसो ब्रह्मराक्षसाः ॥१७॥
विधिहीनस्य यज्ञस्य सद्यः कर्ता विनश्यति । तद्यथा विधिपूर्वं मे क्रतुरेष समाप्यते ॥१८॥
तथा विधानं क्रियतां समर्थाः करणेष्विह ।

The king was pleased to hear the aforesaid utterance of the Brahmans. With eyes rolling through delight, the king then said to the ministers, "Under orders of my preceptors let the requisite materials for the sacrifice be got ready now. (12–14) Let the (sacrificial) horse be released under the superintendence of (four hundred† Kṣatriya) princes capable of guarding and controlling it, along with the arch priest (who is required to pour oblations into the sacrificial fire at every stride the horse takes in the course of its wanderings over the globe).‡ And let a sacrificial ground be prepared on the northern bank of the (holy) Sarayu. (15)§ Let propitiatory rites (intended to avert evils) be elaborately gone through in the proper order of sequence and in accordance with the scriptural ordinance. This (horse-) sacrifice is capable of being accomplished by any and every monarch provided there is no grievous transgression (in the shape of omission of certain essential rites) made in the course of this pre-eminent sacrificial performance; for Brahmans that have attained the form of an ogre (due to omission of Mantras and rites), though well-versed in the science of ritual acts are on the look-out for minor transgressions (in order to get an opportunity to spoil the sacrifice and thereby get the share of the gods). (16-17) He who undertakes a sacrificial performance bereft of the prescribed procedure forthwith perishes. Therefore steps may be taken to ensure that this sacrificial undertaking of mine is concluded in accordance with the prescribed procedure; for you are capable of doing all this."

---

* This is in accordance with the popular saying:—'एष्टव्या बहवः पुत्राः' (One should covet many sons).

† We read in the Brāhmaṇas:—"चतुश्शता रक्षन्ति यज्ञस्याघाताय" (For avoiding interruption in the horse-sacrifice four hundred warriors guard the horse.)

‡ The Brāhmaṇas further declare:—'अश्वस्य मेध्यस्य पदे पदे जुहोति.'

§ Verses 15 to 19 of this canto have been repeated almost verbatim in Canto XII under the same numbers.

तथेति चाब्रुवन् सर्वे मन्त्रिणः प्रतिपूजिताः ॥१९॥
पार्थिवेन्द्रस्य तद् वाक्यं यथापूर्वं निशम्य ते । तथा द्विजास्ते धर्मज्ञा वर्धयन्तो नृपोत्तमम् ॥२०॥
अनुज्ञातास्ततः सर्वे पुनर्जग्मुर्यथागतम् । विसर्जयित्वा तान् विप्रान् सचिवानिदमब्रवीत् ॥२१॥
ऋत्विग्भिरुप संदिष्टो यथावत् क्रतुराप्यताम् । इत्युक्त्वा नृपशार्दूलः सचिवान् समुपस्थितान् ॥२२॥
विसर्जयित्वा स्वं वेश्म प्रविवेश महामतिः । ततः स गत्वा ताः पत्नीर्नरेन्द्रो हृदयंगमाः ॥२३॥
उवाच दीक्षां विशत यक्ष्येऽहं सुतकारणात् ।
तासां तेनातिकान्तेन वचनेन सुवर्चसाम् । मुखपद्मान्यशोभन्त पद्मानीव हिमात्यये ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डेऽष्टमः सर्गः ॥ ८ ॥

Hearing the aforesaid instructions of Daśaratha (the king of kings) in order of sequence, and treated with honour (by the emperor), all those counsellors said "Amen !" Likewise did the aforesaid Brahmans (too including the family and other priests), who knew what is right, said "Amen !", felicitating Daśaratha (a jewel among the kings) and, then, permitted (by him), all withdrew (even) as they had come. Having sent away the aforesaid Brahmans, the emperor spoke to the ministers as follows: "Let the sacrifice recommended by the priests be duly brought to a (successful) conclusion." Having said so and sent away the ministers present (in the assembly), the highly intelligent Daśaratha (a lion among the rulers of men) retired to his gynaeceum. Seeking his favourite consorts mentioned above (entitled as they were to participate in the sacrifice), the aforesaid monarch then said to them, "I shall perform a sacrifice for the sake of a son; (be prepared to) undergo consecration (for the said ceremony along with me)." At the aforesaid utterance (of their husband), which was most pleasing (to hear), the lotus-like faces of the glorious queens brightened like lotus flowers at the expiry of the cold season. (18—24)

Thus ends Canto Eight in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

नवमः सर्गः

Canto IX

A dialogue between Emperor Daśaratha and Sumantra

एतच्छ्रुत्वा रहः सूतो राजानमिदमब्रवीत् । श्रूयतां तत् पुरावृत्तं पुराणे च मया श्रुतम् ॥ १ ॥
ऋत्विग्भिरुपदिष्टोऽयं पुरावृत्तो मया श्रुतः । सनत्कुमारो भगवान् पूर्वं कथितवान् कथाम् ॥ २ ॥
ऋषीणां संनिधौ राजंस्तव पुत्रागमं प्रति । काश्यपस्य च पुत्रोऽस्ति विभाण्डक इति श्रुतः ॥ ३ ॥
ऋष्यशृङ्ग इति ख्यातस्तस्य पुत्रो भविष्यति । स वने नित्यसंवृद्धो मुनिर्वनचरः सदा ॥ ४ ॥
नान्यं जानाति विप्रेन्द्रो नित्यं पित्रनुवर्तनात् । द्वैविध्यं ब्रह्मचर्यस्य भविष्यति महात्मनः ॥ ५ ॥
लोकेषु प्रथितं राजन् विप्रैश्च कथितं सदा ।

Hearing of this (intention of Emperor Daśaratha to undertake a horse-sacrifice for being blessed with a son), Sumantra (the charioteer as well as a minister of Daśaratha) spoke to the king in private as follows:—"(Kindly) listen to a popular legend, also heard by me in the course of a Puranic exposition. (1) This expedient

(in the form of a horse-sacrifice), recommended by the priests (Vasiṣṭha and others), has (also) been heard of by me as the theme of a legend. The omniscient sage Sanatkumāra, O king, foretold of yore an anecdote in the presence of seers in connection with the (future) birth of (four) sons to you. (The narrative as told by Sanatkumāra runs as under:—) There is a son born to the sage Kāśyapa and known by the name of Vibhāṇḍaka. (2-3) A son, who will be known by the name of Ṛṣyaśṛnga, will be born to the latter. Constantly brought up in the woods and ever moving about in the woods (alone), the aforesaid hermit, who will be a ruler of the Brahmans, will know nothing (about the world) beyond constant service to his father (Vibhāṇḍaka). Both* the types of Brahmacharya (celibacy) well-known in the (three) worlds and ever extolled by the Brahmans, will be observed by the high-souled sage.

तस्यैवं वर्तमानस्य कालः समभिवर्तत ॥ ६ ॥
अग्निं शुश्रूषमाणस्य पितरं च यशस्विनम् । एतस्मिन्नेव काले तु रोमपादः प्रतापवान् ॥ ७ ॥
अङ्गेषु प्रथितो राजा भविष्यति महाबलः । तस्य व्यतिक्रमाद् राज्ञो भविष्यति सुदारुणा ॥ ८ ॥
अनावृष्टिः सुघोरा वै सर्वलोकभयावहा । अनावृष्ट्यां तु वृत्तायां राजा दुःखसमन्वितः ॥ ९ ॥
ब्राह्मणाञ्छ्रुतसंवृद्धान् समानीय प्रवक्ष्यति । भवन्तः श्रुतकर्माणो लोकचारित्रवेदिनः ॥१०॥
समादिशन्तु नियमं प्रायश्चित्तं यथा भवेत् । इत्युक्तास्ते ततो राज्ञा सर्वे ब्राह्मणसत्तमाः ॥११॥
वक्ष्यन्ति ते महीपालं ब्राह्मणा वेदपारगाः । विभाण्डकसुतं राजन् सर्वोपायैरिहानय ॥१२॥
आनाय्य तु महीपाल ऋष्यश्रृङ्गं सुसत्कृतम् ।
विभाण्डकसुतं राजन् ब्राह्मणं वेदपारगम् । प्रयच्छ कन्यां शान्तां वै विधिना सुसमाहितः ॥१३॥
तेषां तु वचनं श्रुत्वा राजा चिन्तां प्रपत्स्यते । केनोपायेन वै शक्यमिहानेतुं स वीर्यवान् ॥१४॥
ततो राजा विनिश्चित्य सह मन्त्रिभिरात्मवान् । पुरोहितममात्यांश्च प्रेषयिष्यति सत्कृतान् ॥१५॥
ते तु राज्ञो वचः श्रुत्वा व्यथिता विनताननाः । न गच्छेम ऋषेर्भीता अनुनेष्यन्ति तं नृपम् ॥१६॥
वक्ष्यन्ति चिन्तयित्वा ते तस्योपायांश्च तान् क्षमान् । आनेष्यामो वयं विप्रं न च दोषो भविष्यति ॥१७॥
एवमङ्गाधिपेनैव गणिकाभिर्ऋषेः सुतः । आनीतोऽवर्षयद् देवः शान्ता चास्मै प्रदीयते ॥१८॥
ऋष्यश्रृङ्गस्तु जामाता पुत्रांस्तव विधास्यति । सनत्कुमारकथितमेतावद् व्याहृतं मया ॥१९॥
अथ हृष्टो दशरथः सुमन्त्रं प्रत्यभाषत । यथर्ष्यश्रृङ्गस्त्वानीतो येनोपायेन सोच्यताम् ॥२०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे नवमः सर्गः ॥ ९ ॥

Time will roll past the said (young) sage even while living as aforesaid (in the woods with his own father as his teacher), attending the sacred fire as well as his illustrious father. In those very days, of course, the glorious and mighty Romapāda will be the well-known ruler of the Anga territory. Through some transgression by that king there will be a most severe and fearful drought, that will be a source of terror to all men. When a drought has actually set in, the king, full of agony, will call together Brahmans advanced in learning and address them (as follows):—'You have heard about my (past) actions (responsible for this drought) and are aware of the practices of the world. (4—10) (Kindly) enjoin a course of discipline by undergoing which my sins may be atoned for.' All the aforesaid jewels among the Brahmans will be requested in these words by the king (Romapāda). (11) (And) the said Brahmans, (all) masters of the Vedas, will speak to the king (as follows):—'Fetch here by all (possible) means the sage Ṛṣyaśṛnga, (son of Sage Vibhāṇḍaka), O king! (12) Causing Ṛṣyaśṛnga, Vibhāṇḍaka's son a Brahman well-versed in the Vedas, to be brought with due reverence (to your capital), O ruler of the earth, give away (to him in marriage) your daughter, Śāntā, according to the scriptural ordinance with a devout and unquestioning mind, O monarch!" (13) Hearing their suggestion, however, the king will fall a musing as to by what means that mighty sage can be brought to his capital. (14) Having arrived at a conclusion in consultation with his counsellors, the prudent king will then despatch his family priest and ministers with honour (to bring the young hermit with them). (15) They will, however, be distressed to hear the king's command, and with drooping faces submit (as follows):—'We are not prepared to go, afraid (as we are) of the Ṛṣi (Vibhāṇḍaka, Ṛṣyaśṛnga's father, who was sure to curse those who would try to lure away the young hermit from his father's presence)' and will (try to) pacify the king (in order to avert his displeasure at their disobedience by assuring him that they would think out some other means of luring away the hermit and submit their proposals in that connection later). (16) (Duly) deliberating on the feasible methods of luring away Ṛṣyaśṛnga (from his father's hermitage), they will suggest them (to the king) and say, 'We shall (try to) fetch the (youthful) Brahmaṇ (to your capital) and (we shall do so in such a way that) no blame will attach to us.' (17) In this way (according to the suggestion of the family priest and the ministers of King Romapāda) the Ṛṣi's son (Ṛṣyaśṛnga) will be caused by Romapāda (the ruler of the Anga territory) to be brought (to his own capital) through courtesans, when the rain god will cause clouds to send down rain and Śāntā (Daśaratha's daughter adopted by Romapāda) will be given (in marriage) to Ṛṣyaśṛnga. (18) And Ṛṣyaśṛnga, your son-in-law, will actually get sons for you (by pouring oblations into the sacred fire). This prophecy of the sage Sanatkumāra has been reproduced by me (as aforesaid)." (19) Full of delight Daśaratha forthwith replied to Sumantra, "It may (now) be pointed out (to me) how and by what device the sage Ṛṣyaśṛnga was brought (to the capital of Romapāda)." (20)

---

* The primary type of Brahmacharya is the one characterized by the wearing of a girdle of Muñja grass and deerskin and living singly in the house of a teacher; while the secondary type of Brahmacharya consists in marrying a girl of one's own Varṇa (grade in society), after undergoing a course of training in his teacher's house, and copulating with her only during the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, tenth, twelfth, fourteenth and sixteenth nights following the menstruation, barring of course the first four nights as well as the Parva days, viz, the new moon and the full moon and the eighth and fourteenth lunar days. Says the sage Yājñavalkya:—

षोडशर्तुनिशाः स्त्रीणां तस्मिन् युग्मासु संविशेत् । ब्रह्मचार्येव पर्वाण्याद्याश्चतस्रश्च वर्जयेत् ॥

Thus ends Canto Nine in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

दशमः सर्गः

Canto X

How the sage Ṛṣyaśṛnga was lured away to the capital of Romapāda and married to his adopted daughter, Śāntā

सुमन्त्रश्चोदितो राज्ञा प्रोवाचेदं वचस्तदा ।
यथर्ष्यशृङ्गस्त्वानीतो येनोपायेन मन्त्रिभिः । तन्मे निगदितं सर्वं शृणु मे मन्त्रिभिः सह ॥ १ ॥

Vaidika Pandit Sri V Harīharan Collection, Sholinganallur, Chennai

रोमपादमुवाचेदं सहामात्यः पुरोहितः । उपायो निरपायोऽयमस्माभिरभिचिन्तितः ॥ २ ॥
ऋष्यशृङ्गो वनचरस्तपःस्वाध्यायसंयुतः । अनभिज्ञस्तु नारीणां विषयाणां सुखस्य च ॥ ३ ॥
इन्द्रियार्थैरभिमतैर्नरचित्तप्रमाथिभिः । पुरमानाययिष्यामः क्षिप्रं चाध्यवसीयताम् ॥ ४ ॥
गणिकास्तत्र गच्छन्तु रूपवत्यः स्वलंकृताः । प्रलोभ्य विविधोपायैरानेष्यन्तीह सत्कृताः ॥ ५ ॥

Urged by the king (Daśaratha), Sumantra then made the following reply:—"Hear from me with your counsellors, as being exhaustively told by me, how and by what device the sage Ṛṣyaśṛṅga was brought (to the capital of Romapāda) by his counsellors. (1) Accompanied by the ministers, the family-priest (of Romapāda) spoke to Romapāda as follows:—"The following unfailing expedient has been carefully thought out by us. (2) Living (as he does) in the woods and rich in askesis and study of the Vedas, Ṛṣyaśṛnga is wholly unacquainted with the fair sex as well as with the objects of senses and the pleasures relating to them. (3) We shall in no time cause him to be brought to your capital by means of pleasing objects of senses that attract the mind of men; steps may therefore be taken (towards this end). (4) Let beautifully adorned courtesans of comely appearance proceed there (to the hermitage of his father). Received kindly (by the youthful sage), they will lure him away to this place by recourse to diverse devices." (5)

श्रुत्वा तथेति राजा च प्रत्युवाच पुरोहितम् । पुरोहितो मन्त्रिणश्च तदा चक्रुश्च ते तथा ॥ ६ ॥
वारमुख्यास्तु तच्छ्रुत्वा वनं प्रविविशुर्महत् । आश्रमस्याविदूरेऽस्मिन् यत्नं कुर्वन्ति दर्शने ॥ ७ ॥
ऋषेः पुत्रस्य धीरस्य नित्यमाश्रमवासिनः । पितुः स नित्यसंतुष्टो नातिचक्राम चाश्रमात् ॥ ८ ॥
न तेन जन्मप्रभृति दृष्टपूर्वं तपस्विना । स्त्री वा पुमान् वा यच्चान्यत् सत्त्वं नगरराष्ट्रजम् ॥ ९ ॥

Hearing this, the king (Romapāda) replied to the priest, "So be it!" The family priest (in his turn) forthwith instructed the counsellors (accordingly) and the latter did as they were told (*i. e.*, despatched the courtesans with the necessary equipment). (6) Hearing the royal command, the foremost of the courtesans (of Romapāda's capital) entered the extensive forest and, staying not very far from the hermitage (of the sage Vibhāṇḍaka) in the woodland (adjoining Śṛngaverapura, associated with the name of Ṛṣyaśṛnga) made attempts to have a look at the Ṛṣi's son, who was full of self-control and always stayed in the hermitage. Ever contented with his father's affection and fostering care he never stepped beyond the hermitage. (7-8) Since his (very) birth that hermit (boy) had never before seen any man or woman or (for that matter) any other living being born in a town or in the countryside. (9)

ततः कदाचित् तं देशमाजगाम यदृच्छया । विभाण्डकसुतस्तत्र ताश्चापश्यद् वराङ्गनाः ॥१०॥
ताश्चित्रवेषाः प्रमदा गायन्त्यो मधुरस्वरम् । ऋषिपुत्रमुपागम्य सर्वा वचनमब्रुवन् ॥११॥
कस्त्वं किं वर्तसे ब्रह्मञ्ज्ञातुमिच्छामहे वयम् । एकस्त्वं विजने दूरे वने चरसि शंस नः ॥१२॥
अदृष्टरूपास्तास्तेन काम्यरूपा वने स्त्रियः । हार्दात्तस्य मतिर्जाता आख्यातुं पितरं स्वकम् ॥१३॥
पिता विभाण्डकोऽस्माकं तस्याहं सुत औरसः । ऋष्यशृङ्ग इति ख्यातं नाम कर्म च मे भुवि ॥१४॥
इहाश्रमपदोऽस्माकं समीपे शुभदर्शनाः । करिष्ये वोऽत्र पूजां वै सर्वेषां विधिपूर्वकम् ॥१५॥
ऋषिपुत्रवचः श्रुत्वा सर्वासां मतिरास वै । तदाश्रमपदं द्रष्टुं जग्मुः सर्वास्ततोऽङ्गनाः ॥१६॥

Impelled by providence, one day, Ṛṣyaśṛnga (son of Vibhāṇḍaka) came (out of his hermitage) to the area where the courtesans were encamping, and beheld there the aforesaid lovely women. (10) Singing in a melodious strain, all the aforesaid young women, who were attired in different colours, approached Ṛṣyaśṛnga (son of Vibhāṇḍaka) and addressed (to him) the following question:—(11) "We desire to know, O holy one, who you are and how you get on. (Pray) tell us, wherefore do you roam about all alone in the remote and lonely forest ?" (12) Women as they were, whose form had never been seen by him (before) in that forest and who were endowed with an exterior worth coveting, there appeared in him an urge, born of natural attraction, to mention the name of his father (and other things too). (13) "Vibhāṇḍaka is (the name of) my father and I am his own son (sprung from his loins). My name, Ṛṣyaśṛnga, as well as my pursuit (in the form of austerities) is celebrated in this (tract of) land. (14) In this (very) forest close by there is the site of our hermitage, O lovely ones ! There I shall certainly offer worship (hospitality) to you all with due ceremony." (15) On hearing the reply of Ṛṣyaśṛnga (son of sage Vibhāṇḍaka) there appeared in all of them a resolve to see the site of his hermitage, and all the women (accordingly) departed from that place (to the hermitage). (16)

गतानां तु ततः पूजामृषिपुत्रश्चकार ह । इदमर्घ्यमिदं पाद्यमिदं मूलं फलं च नः ॥१७॥
प्रतिगृह्य तु तां पूजां सर्वा एव समुत्सुकाः । ऋषेर्भीताश्च शीघ्रं तु गमनाय मतिं दधुः ॥१८॥
अस्माकमपि मुख्यानि फलानीमानि हे द्विज । गृहाण विप्र भद्रं ते भक्षयस्व च माचिरम् ॥१९॥
ततस्तास्तं समालिङ्ग्य सर्वा हर्षसमन्विताः । मोदकान् प्रददुस्तस्मै भक्ष्यांश्च विविधाञ्छुभान् ॥२०॥
तानि चास्वाद्य तेजस्वी फलानीति स्म मन्यते । अनास्वादितपूर्वाणि वने नित्यनिवासिनाम् ॥२१॥
आपृच्छ्य च तदा विप्रं व्रतचर्यां निवेद्य च । गच्छन्ति स्मापदेशात्ता भीतास्तस्य पितुः स्त्रियः ॥२२॥

Ṛṣyaśṛnga (son of Vibhāṇḍaka), so the tradition goes, then did worship to them even as they arrived (at his hermitage), saying, "Here is water to wash your hands and there is water to wash your feet with; and here are roots and fruits offered by me." (17) Accepting the aforesaid worship, however, all of them actually made up their mind to return apace, ill at ease as they were, being afraid of the Ṛṣi (Vibhāṇḍaka, who had gone out on some errand at that particular moment). (18) (While returning, they said,) "Accept, O sage, these excellent fruits offered by us (too) and eat them without delay, O holy one ! This may do you good." (19) Closely embracing him and full of delight they all then gave him small round sweetmeats and various kinds of (other) dainty dishes to eat. (20) Even after enjoying them the glorious sage took them for fruits (alone); for they were such as had never been tasted before by those ever dwelling in the woods. (21) Taking leave of the (young) Brahman and telling him of some sacred observance (to be gone through by them), those women then departed under that pretext, afraid as they were of his father. (22)

गतासु तासु सर्वासु काश्यपस्यात्मजो द्विजः । अस्वस्थहृदयश्चासीद् दुःखाच्च परिवर्तते ॥२३॥
ततोऽपरेद्युस्तं देशमाजगाम स वीर्यवान् । विभाण्डकसुतः श्रीमान् मनसा चिन्तयन्मुहुः ॥२४॥
मनोज्ञा यत्र ता दृष्टा वारमुख्याः स्वलंकृताः । दृष्ट्वैव च ततो विप्रमायान्तं हृष्टमानसाः ॥२५॥
उपसृत्य ततः सर्वास्तास्तमूचुरिदं वचः । एह्याश्रमपदं सौम्य अस्माकमिति चाब्रुवन् ॥२६॥
चित्राण्यत्र बहूनि स्युर्मूलानि च फलानि च । तत्राप्येष विशेषेण विधिर्हि भविता ध्रुवम् ॥२७॥

When they had all left, the Brahman (Ṛṣyaśṛnga), sprung from the loins of Vibhāṇḍaka (a scion of the sage Kaśyapa), felt uneasy at heart and was restless through agony. (23) Thinking of them in his mind again and again, that powerful and glorious sage Ṛṣyaśṛnga (son of Vibhāṇḍaka) departed from that place the following day to that area where those charming courtesans had been seen (by him) beautifully adorned (the previous day). Going forth to meet him with a delighted mind the moment they saw the sage coming from his hermitage, they all then addressed to him the following request :—"(Just) pay a visit to our hermitage, O gentle one !" and (further) spoke as follows:—(24—26) "Although roots and fruits of various kinds may be had in abundance here, this process (of entertainment) will surely be gone through there (in our hermitage) in a special degree even as compared to this place" (27)

श्रुत्वा तु वचनं तासां सर्वासां हृदयंगमम् । गमनाय मतिं चक्रे तं च निन्युस्तथा स्त्रियः ॥२८॥
तत्र चानीयमाने तु विप्रे तस्मिन् महात्मनि । ववर्ष सहसा देवो जगत् प्रह्लादयंस्तदा ॥२९॥
वर्षेणैवागतं विप्रं तापसं स नराधिपः । प्रत्युद्गम्य मुनिं प्रह्वः शिरसा च महीं गतः ॥३०॥
अर्घ्यं च प्रददौ तस्मै न्यायतः सुसमाहितः । वव्रे प्रसादं विप्रेन्द्रान्मा विप्रं मन्युराविशेत् ॥३१॥
अन्तःपुरं प्रवेश्यास्मै कन्यां दत्त्वा यथाविधि । शान्तां शान्तेन मनसा राजा हर्षमवाप सः ॥३२॥
एवं स न्यवसत् तत्र सर्वकामैः सुपूजितः । ऋष्यशृङ्गो महातेजाः शान्तया सह भार्यया ॥३३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे दशमः सर्गः ॥ १० ॥

Hearing the prayer of them all, (which was so) captivating to the heart, he made up his mind to go (with them) and the women took him (to the capital of King Romapāda) in that manner (in a boat on the holy Ganga). (28) Even while the high-souled Brahman was being escorted there (to the Anga territory) the god of rain sent down a shower all of a sudden at that (very) time, bringing great joy to the world. (29) Going forth to meet the ascetic Brahman, who had arrived (in his kingdom) synchronously with the rain, the said ruler of men bowed low to the sage and touched the ground with his head. (30) Fully composed in mind he offered him with due ceremony water to wash his hands with and begged of that prince among Brahmans a boon to the effect that no wrath might enter (the mind of) the sage (or his father for his having caused the sage to be lured away to his kingdom from his father's presence). (31) Having ushered him into the gynaeceum and duly given away with a tranquil mind his daughter, Śāntā, the said king experienced (great) joy. (32) Duly entertained with all the desired objects in this way, the said Ṛṣyaśṛnga, who was possessed of unique glory, lived there (in the gynaeceum of King Romapāda) with his wedded wife, Śāntā. (33)

Thus ends Canto Ten in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकादशः सर्गः

Canto XI

Urged by Sumantra, Emperor Daśaratha calls on his friend, King Romapāda, and brings with the latter's permission Śāntā and Ṛṣyaśṛnga to his own palace.

भूय एव हि राजेन्द्र शृणु मे वचनं हितम् । यथा स देवप्रवरः कथयामास बुद्धिमान् ॥ १ ॥
इक्ष्वाकूणां कुले जातो भविष्यति सुधार्मिकः । नाम्ना दशरथो राजा श्रीमान् सत्यप्रतिश्रवः ॥ २ ॥
अङ्गराजेन सख्यं च तस्य राज्ञो भविष्यति । कन्या चास्य महाभागा शान्ता नाम भविष्यति ॥ २ ॥
पुत्रस्त्वङ्गस्य राज्ञस्तु रोमपाद इति श्रुतः । तं स राजा दशरथो गमिष्यति महायशाः ॥ ४ ॥
अनपत्योऽस्मि धर्मात्मञ्शान्ताभर्ता मम क्रतुम् । आहरेत त्वयाऽऽज्ञप्तः संतानार्थं कुलस्य च ॥ ५ ॥

Further hear from me, O king of kings, the wholesome words which the aforesaid wise seer (the foremost of all heavenly beings) was actually pleased to utter:—(1) "In the line of the Ikṣwākus will be born a highly pious and glorious king, Daśaratha by name, who will be true to his promise. (2) Friendship will be developed by the said monarch with the ruler of the Angas. And the latter will have a highly blessed daughter, Śāntā by name (given in adoption to him by Daśaratha). (3) The ruler of the Angas (the son of King Anga) will be known by the name of Romapāda. Possessed of great renown, the said King Daśaratha will approach the latter (with the following request):—(4) '(Since) I am without (a male) issue, O king whose mind is given to piety, let the sage Ṛṣyaśṛnga (the husband of Śāntā), (when) permitted by you, perform a sacrifice for the propagation of my race.' (5)

श्रुत्वा राज्ञोऽथ तद् वाक्यं मनसा स विचिन्त्य च । प्रदास्यते पुत्रवन्तं शान्ताभर्तारमात्मवान् ॥ ६ ॥
प्रतिगृह्य च तं विप्रं स राजा विगतज्वरः । आहरिष्यति तं यज्ञं प्रहृष्टेनान्तरात्मना ॥ ७ ॥
तं च राजा दशरथो यशस्कामः कृताञ्जलिः । ऋष्यशृङ्गं द्विजश्रेष्ठं वरयिष्यति धर्मवित् ॥ ८ ॥
यज्ञार्थं प्रसवार्थं च स्वर्गार्थं च नरेश्वरः । लभते च स तं कामं द्विजमुख्याद् विशाम्पतिः ॥ ९ ॥
पुत्राश्चास्य भविष्यन्ति चत्वारोऽमितविक्रमाः । वंशप्रतिष्ठानकराः सर्वभूतेषु विश्रुताः ॥१०॥

"Hearing the aforesaid request of the emperor and revolving it in his mind, and resolving to comply with it, the noble-minded Romapāda will instantly part with the sage Ṛṣyaśṛnga (the husband of Śāntā), (already) blessed with a son. (6) Taking (with him) the said Brahman (Ṛṣyaśṛnga), and rid of his agony (by securing his very presence), the celebrated monarch (Daśaratha) will perform (with his help and guidance) the aforementioned sacrifice (for being blessed with a son) with his inner mind highly gratified. (7) Nay, desirous of fame, King Daśaratha, the ruler of men, who knows what is right, will request Ṛṣyaśṛnga, the foremost among the Brahmans, with joined palms to officiate as a priest for conducting the sacrifice, obtaining a (male) progeny and securing (an abode in) heaven (through a son). And through that jewel among the Brahmans King Daśaratha (the ruler of the people) will get that desired object. (8-9) And (as a result of that sacrifice) there will be born to him (as many as) four sons possessed of immense prowess, and well-known among all created beings, who will bring honour to their line." (10)

एवं स देवप्रवरः पूर्वं कथितवान् कथाम् । सनत्कुमारो भगवान् पुरा देवयुगे प्रभुः ॥११॥
स त्वं पुरुषशार्दूल समानय सुसत्कृतम् । स्वयमेव महाराज गत्वा सबलवाहनः ॥१२॥

So did that omniscient and powerful sage Sanatkumāra, the foremost among heavenly beings, utter of yore a prophecy in the Satya Yuga preceding the current round of four Yugas. (11) As such (keen as you are to obtain a male progeny), O tiger among men, bring you the sage, highly honoured, with due ceremony, going personally (to escort him) with a detachment (of your troops) and animals and vehicles used for conveying men, O great king ! (12)

सुमन्त्रस्य वचः श्रुत्वा हृष्टो दशरथोऽभवत् । अनुमान्य वसिष्ठं च सूतवाक्यं निशाम्य च ॥१३॥
सान्तःपुरः सहामात्यः प्रययौ यत्र स द्विजः । वनानि सरितश्चैव व्यतिक्रम्य शनैः शनैः ॥१४॥
अभिचक्राम तं देशं यत्र वै मुनिपुंगवः । आसाद्य तं द्विजश्रेष्ठं रोमपादसमीपगम् ॥१५॥
ऋषिपुत्रं ददर्शाथो दीप्यमानमिवानलम् । ततो राजा यथायोग्यं पूजां चक्रे विशेषतः ॥१६॥
सखित्वात् तस्य वै राज्ञः प्रहृष्टेनान्तरात्मना । रोमपादेन चाख्यातमृषिपुत्राय धीमते ॥१७॥
सख्यं सम्बन्धकं चैव तदा तं प्रत्यपूजयत् । एवं सुसत्कृतस्तेन सहोषित्वा नरर्षभः ॥१८॥
सप्ताष्टदिवसान् राजा राजानमिदमब्रवीत् । शान्ता तव सुता राजन् सह भर्त्रा विशाम्पते ॥१९॥
मदीयं नगरं यातु कार्यं हि महदुद्यतम् । तथेति राजा संश्रुत्य गमनं तस्य धीमतः ॥२०॥
उवाच वचनं विप्रं गच्छ त्वं सह भार्यया । ऋषिपुत्रः प्रतिश्रुत्य तथेत्याह नृपं तदा ॥२१॥

Daśaratha was rejoiced to hear the advice of Sumantra; nay, having conveyed the opinion of the charioteer (to Vasiṣṭha) and secured the consent of Vasiṣṭha, proceeded with the queens (the inmates of his gynacceum) as well as with his ministers to the place where that Brahmaṇ was. Passing through forests and crossing streams he gradually reached that land where Ṛṣyaśṛnga (the foremost among the sages) actually lived. Reaching that place, he forthwith saw the son of Vibhāṇḍaka, the foremost among the Brahmans, resplendent as fire and seated near Romapāda. With an extremely delighted mind the king (Romapāda) thereupon offered worship in order of seniority to the emperor as well as to those who accompanied him with particular reverence because of the emperor being his (esteemed) friend. By Romapāda was made known to the enlightened Ṛṣyaśṛnga (the son of Vibhāṇḍaka) his friendship (with the emperor) as well as the relation in which the emperor stood to the sage (being the real father of his wife, Śāntā) as also how Śāntā was given in adoption by the emperor to Romapāda, who was issueless, at the latter's request; thereupon Ṛṣyaśṛnga honoured the emperor in return (for the latter's salutations). Greatly honoured in this way by Romapāda and having stayed with him for seven or eight days, the emperor, the foremost among men, spoke to the king as follows:—"Let your daughter, Śāntā, O king, proceed along with her husband to my capital, O ruler of the people, since there is a great undertaking on foot (there)." Having promised the visit of that wise man (Ṛṣyaśṛnga) with the words "Amen !", the king addressed the following request to the Brahman:—"Proceed you (to Ayodhya) with your wife !" Hearing this, Ṛṣyaśṛnga (the son of Vibhāṇḍaka) said to the king at once, "So be it !" (13—21)

स नृपेणाभ्यनुज्ञातः प्रययौ सह भार्यया । तावन्योन्याञ्जलिं कृत्वा स्नेहात्संश्लिष्य चोरसा ॥२२॥
ननन्दतुर्दशरथो रोमपादश्च वीर्यवान् । ततः सुहृदमापृच्छ्य प्रस्थितो रघुनन्दनः ॥२३॥

पौरेषु प्रेषयामास दूतान् वै शीघ्रगामिनः । क्रियतां नगरं सर्वं क्षिप्रमेव स्वलंकृतम् ॥२४॥
धूपितं सिक्तसम्मृष्टं पताकाभिरलंकृतम् । ततः प्रहृष्टाः पौरास्ते श्रुत्वा राजानमागतम् ॥२५॥
तथा चक्रुश्च तत् सर्वं राज्ञा यत् प्रेषितं तदा । ततः स्वलंकृतं राजा नगरं प्रविवेश ह ॥२६॥
शङ्खदुन्दुभिनिर्ह्रादैः पुरस्कृत्वा द्विजर्षभम् । ततः प्रमुदिताः सर्वे दृष्ट्वा वै नागरा द्विजम् ॥२७॥
प्रवेश्यमानं सत्कृत्य नरेन्द्रेणेन्द्रकर्मणा । यथा दिवि सुरेन्द्रेण सहस्राक्षेण काश्यपम् ॥२८॥
अन्तःपुरं प्रवेश्यैनं पूजां कृत्वा च शास्त्रतः । कृतकृत्यं तदाऽऽत्मानं मेने तस्योपवाहनात् ॥२९॥
अन्तःपुराणि सर्वाणि शान्तां दृष्ट्वा तथागताम् । सह भर्त्रा विशालाक्षीं प्रीत्याऽऽनन्दमुपागमन् ॥३०॥
पूज्यमाना तु ताभिः सा राज्ञा चैव विशेषतः । उवास तत्र सुखिता कंचित् कालं सहद्विजा ॥३१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकादशः सर्गः ॥ ११ ॥

(Thus) permitted by the king, he left with his wife (for Ayodhya). Greeting with joined palms and clasping each other to their bosom out of affection, the mighty Daśaratha and Romapāda both rejoiced. Taking leave of his friend, Daśaratha (a scion of Raghu) then departed (for his capital). (22-23) (While doing so) he despatched (in advance) swift-footed messengers (with the following instructions) to the citizens (of Ayodhya) :—"Let the whole city be tastefully decorated at once, (nay) sprinkled with water and (then) dusted, fumigated with incense and adorned with buntings." Overjoyed to hear of the king having (well-nigh) arrived, the aforesaid citizens thereupon did at once all that precisely as had been desired by the king. Placing Ṛṣyaśṛnga (the foremost of the Brahmans) at his head, the king then entered the well-decorated city in the midst of blasts of conches and the sound of kettle-drums; so the tradition goes. All the citizens were really much delighted at that time to see the Brahman (Ṛṣyaśṛnga) being treated with respect and ushered into the city by the king, who had rendered help to Indra (in his campaign against the demons),—(even) as Lord Vāmana (son of the sage Kaśyapa) was ushered into paradise by the thousand-eyed Indra (the ruler of the gods). (24—28) Having introduced the sage into the gynaeceum and offered him worship according to the scriptural ordinance, Daśaratha thought himself at that time as one whose object (in life) had been accomplished, by escorting him (to his palace). (29) Seeing the large-eyed Śāntā come with her husband in that state (with a babe), all the queens experienced (great) joy through love. (30) Being treated with honour by them and particularly by the king himself, she lived there happily for some time along with her husband and babe. (31)

Thus ends Canto Eleven in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्वादशः सर्गः

Canto XII

Emperor Daśaratha gives his consent to the performance of a horse-sacrifice for being blessed with a son.

ततः काले बहुतिथे कस्मिंश्चित् सुमनोहरे । वसन्ते समनुप्राप्ते राज्ञो यष्टुं मनोऽभवत् ॥ १ ॥

ततः प्रणम्य शिरसा तं विप्रं देववर्णिनम् । यज्ञाय वरयामास संतानार्थं कुलस्य च ॥ २ ॥
तथेति च स राजानमुवाच वसुधाधिपम् । सम्भाराः सम्भ्रियन्तां ते तुरगश्च विमुच्यताम् ॥ ३ ॥
सरय्वाश्चोत्तरे तीरे यज्ञभूमिर्विधीयताम् । ततोऽब्रवीन्नृपो वाक्यं ब्राह्मणान् वेदपारगान् ॥ ४ ॥
सुमन्त्रावाहय क्षिप्रमृत्विजो ब्रह्मवादिनः । सुयज्ञं वामदेवं च जाबालिमथ काश्यपम् ॥ ५ ॥
पुरोहितं वसिष्ठं च ये चान्ये द्विजसत्तमाः ।

Afterwards, when a considerable time had elapsed (since the advent of Ṛṣyaśṛnga), and an unusually charming spring set in, an urge was felt by the emperor to undertake a sacrifice (for being blessed with a son). (1) Touching the ground with his head he sought (the help of) the aforesaid Brahman (Ṛṣyaśṛnga), who possessed the splendour of a god, for conducting a sacrifice with a view to the propagation of his race as well as to the attainment of heaven. (2) The sage accordingly said to the king, who ruled over the (entire) globe, "Requisites (for the sacrifice) may be got ready and your horse let loose. And let a sacrificial ground be prepared on the northern bank of the Sarayu." The king then spoke (to Sumantra) as follows:—"Sumantra, speedily call Brahmans who are masters of the Vedas and priests who are capable of expounding the Vedas, *viz*, Suyajña and Vāmadeva, Jābāli and Kāśyapa, Vasiṣṭha, my family priest, and whoever other jewels among Brahmans there may be."

ततः सुमन्त्रस्त्वरितं गत्वा त्वरितविक्रमः ॥ ६ ॥
समानयत् स तान् सर्वान् समस्तान् वेदपारगान् । तान् पूजयित्वा धर्मात्मा राजा दशरथस्तदा ॥ ७ ॥
धर्मार्थसहितं युक्तं श्लक्ष्णं वचनमब्रवीत् । मम तातप्यमानस्य पुत्रार्थं नास्ति वै सुखम् ॥ ८ ॥
पुत्रार्थं हयमेधेन यक्ष्यामीति मतिर्मम । तदहं यष्टुमिच्छामि हयमेधेन कर्मणा ॥ ९ ॥
ऋषिपुत्रप्रभावेण कामान् प्राप्स्यामि चाप्यहम् । ततः साध्विति तद्वाक्यं ब्राह्मणाः प्रत्यपूजयन् ॥१०॥
वसिष्ठप्रमुखाः सर्वे पार्थिवस्य मुखाच्च्युतम् । ऋष्यश्रृङ्गपुरोगाश्च प्रत्यूचुर्नृपतिं तदा ॥११॥
सम्भाराः सम्भ्रियन्तां ते तुरगश्च विमुच्यताम् । सरय्वाश्चोत्तरे तीरे यज्ञभूमिर्विधीयताम् ॥१२॥
सर्वथा प्राप्स्यसे पुत्रांश्चतुरोऽमितविक्रमान् । यस्य ते धार्मिकी बुद्धिरियं पुत्रार्थमागता ॥१३॥

Proceeding hastily, the celebrated Sumantra, who walked with quick paces, brought together in a body the aforesaid Brahmans, who were all masters of the Vedas, Receiving them with respect, King Daśaratha, whose mind was given to piety, then addressed (to them) the following words, which were reasonable and sweet and full of piety and purpose:-"Really there is no joy to me, who have been suffering (great) agony for (want of) a son (all these years). (3—8) I shall (accordingly) propitiate the Lord with a horse-sacrifice: such is my resolve. I, therefore, intend to worship God through a sacrificial performance called Aśwamedha (a horse-sacrifice). (9) And I shall certainly attain (all) my desired ends through the might (spiritual power) of Ṛṣyaśṛnga." Thereupon, saying "Amen!" all the Brahmans with Vasiṣṭha as their leader acclaimed the aforesaid proposal that had emanated from the lips of the king. And those headed by Ṛṣyaśṛnga then replied to the king as follows:—(10-11) "Let (all) the requisites (for the sacrifice) be got together and your horse be released and let a sacrificial ground be prepared on the northern bank of the Sarayu. (12) You, to whom such a pious idea has occurred for securing a son, shall at all events secure four sons possessed of immense prowess." (13)

ततः प्रीतोऽभवद् राजा श्रुत्वा तु द्विजभाषितम् । अमात्यानब्रवीद् राजा हर्षेणेदं शुभाक्षरम् ॥१४॥
गुरूणां वचनाच्छीघ्रं सम्भाराः सम्भ्रियन्तु मे । समर्थाधिष्ठितश्चाश्वः सोपाध्यायो विमुच्यताम् ॥१५॥
सरय्वाश्चोत्तरे तीरे यज्ञभूमिर्विधीयताम् । शान्तयश्चाभिवर्धन्तां यथाकल्पं यथाविधि ॥१६॥
शक्यः कर्तुमयं यज्ञः सर्वेणापि महीक्षिता । नापराधो भवेत् कष्टो यद्यस्मिन् क्रतुसत्तमे ॥१७॥
छिद्रं हि मृगयन्त्येते विद्वांसो ब्रह्मराक्षसाः । विधिहीनस्य यज्ञस्य सद्यः कर्ता विनश्यति ॥१८॥
तद् यथा विधिपूर्वं मे क्रतुरेष समाप्यते । तथा विधानं क्रियतां समर्थाः करणेष्विह ॥१९॥

The king got really pleased to hear the acclamation of the Brahmans. The monarch then joyfully spoke to the ministers in sweet words as follows:—(14) "Let the requisites (for the sacrifice) be got together apace according to the instructions of my elders. And let the (sacrificial) horse be let loose under the superintendence of (four hundred Kṣatriya) princes capable of guarding and controlling it, along with the arch-priest. (15) Nay, let a sacrificial ground be prepared on the northern bank of the Sarayu and let propitiatory rites (intended to avert evils) be elaborately gone through in the proper order of sequence and in accordance with the scriptural ordinance. (16) This (horse-) sacrifice is capable of being accomplished by any and every monarch provided there is no grievous transgression (in the shape of omission of certain essential rites) made in the course of this pre-eminent sacrificial performance. (17) For Brahmans that have attained the form of an ogre (due to the omission of Mantras and rites), though learned (well-versed in the science of ritual acts) are on the look-out even for a minor transgression (in order to get an opportunity to spoil the sacrifice and thereby get the share of the gods) and he who undertakes a sacrificial performance bereft of the prescribed procedure forthwith perishes. (18) Therefore steps may be taken to ensure that this sacrificial undertaking of mine is concluded in accordance with the prescribed procedure; (for) you are capable of doing all this." (19)

तथेति च ततः सर्वे मन्त्रिणः प्रत्यपूजयन् । पार्थिवेन्द्रस्य तद् वाक्यं यथाऽऽज्ञप्तमकुर्वत ॥२०॥
ततो द्विजास्ते धर्मज्ञमस्तुवन् पार्थिवर्षभम् । अनुज्ञातास्ततः सर्वे पुनर्जग्मुर्यथागतम् ॥२१॥
गतेषु तेषु विप्रेषु मन्त्रिणस्तान् नराधिपः । विसर्जयित्वा स्वं वेश्म प्रविवेश महामतिः ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे द्वादशः सर्गः ॥ १२ ॥

Thereupon all the counsellors (of the king) acclaimed the aforesaid command of the emperor with the words "Let it be so", and did as they were enjoined to do. (20) Those Brahmans next glorified the emperor, who knew what is right. Then, being permitted (by the emperor), all returned as they had come. (21) Sending away the said counsellors when those Brahmans had dispersed, the highly intelligent monarch entered his gynaeceum. (22)

Thus ends Canto Twelve in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रयोदशः सर्गः

Canto XIII

Feudatory chiefs called under orders of the emperor and charged with the duty of setting up stables etc.

पुनः प्राप्ते वसन्ते तु पूर्णः संवत्सरोऽभवत् । प्रसवार्थं गतो यष्टुं हयमेधेन वीर्यवान् ॥ १ ॥
अभिवाद्य वसिष्ठं च न्यायतः प्रतिपूज्य च । अब्रवीत् प्रश्रितं वाक्यं प्रसवार्थं द्विजोत्तमम् ॥ २ ॥
यज्ञो मे क्रियतां ब्रह्मन् यथोक्तं मुनिपुंगव । यथा न विघ्नाः क्रियन्ते यज्ञाङ्गेषु विधीयताम् ॥ ३ ॥
भवान् स्निग्धः सुहृन्मह्यं गुरुश्च परमो महान् । वोढव्यो भवता चैव भारो यज्ञस्य चोद्यतः ॥ ४ ॥
तथेति च स राजानमब्रवीद् द्विजसत्तमः । करिष्ये सर्वमेवैतद् भवता यत् समर्थितम् ॥ ५ ॥

The vernal season having appeared again, one year* got completed and the powerful monarch (Daśaratha) called on Vasiṣṭha with a view to commencing the horse-sacrifice for the sake of a (male) progeny. (1) Having greeted Vasiṣṭha and (his wife) Arundhatī and offered homage to them according to the scriptural ordinance, he addressed the following humble prayer to Vasiṣṭha (the foremost of the Brahmans) with the object of obtaining a son:—(2) "Let the sacrifice intended to be performed by me, O holy one, be commenced as enjoined by the scriptures, O jewel among sages, and steps may be taken to ensure that no obstacles may be thrown (by the ogres etc.) in the way of items forming part of the sacrifice. (3) You are a loving friend to me as well as my supreme preceptor and an exalted soul (too). The (whole) burden of the sacrifice that has come to me is to be borne by you alone." (4) "Amen!" said that jewel among the Brahmans to the emperor, and added, "I shall undoubtedly do all that which has been sought for by you." (5)

ततोऽब्रवीद् द्विजान् वृद्धान् यज्ञकर्मसुनिष्ठितान् । स्थापत्ये निष्ठितांश्चैव वृद्धान् परमधार्मिकान् ॥ ६ ॥
कर्मान्तिकाञ्शिल्पकारान् वर्धकीन् खनकानपि । गणकाञ्शिल्पिनश्चैव तथैव नटनर्तकान् ॥ ७ ॥
तथा शुचीञ्शास्त्रविदः पुरुषान् सुबहुश्रुतान् । यज्ञकर्म समीहन्तां भवन्तो राजशासनात् ॥ ८ ॥
इष्टका बहुसाहस्री शीघ्रमानीयतामिति । उपकार्याः क्रियन्तां च राज्ञो बहुगुणान्विताः ॥ ९ ॥
ब्राह्मणावसथाश्चैव कर्तव्याः शतशः शुभाः । भक्ष्यान्नपानैर्बहुभिः समुपेताः सुनिष्ठिताः ॥१०॥
तथा पौरजनस्यापि कर्तव्याश्च सुविस्तराः । आगतानां सुदूराच्च पार्थिवानां पृथक् पृथक् ॥११॥
वाजिवारणशालाश्च तथा शय्यागृहाणि च । भटानां महदावासा वैदेशिकनिवासिनाम् ॥१२॥
आवासा बहुभक्ष्या वै सर्वकामैरुपस्थिताः । तथा पौरजनस्यापि जनस्य बहुशोभनम् ॥१३॥
दातव्यमन्नं विधिवत् सत्कृत्य न तु लीलया । सर्वे वर्णा यथा पूजां प्राप्नुवन्ति सुसत्कृताः ॥१४॥
न चावज्ञा प्रयोक्तव्या कामक्रोधवशादपि । यज्ञकर्मसु ये व्यग्राः पुरुषाः शिल्पिनस्तथा ॥१५॥
तेषामपि विशेषेण पूजा कार्या यथाक्रमम् । ये स्युः सम्पूजिताः सर्वे वसुभिर्भोजनेन च ॥१६॥
यथा सर्वं सुविहितं न किंचित् परिहीयते । तथा भवन्तः कुर्वन्तु प्रीतियुक्तेन चेतसा ॥१७॥

The sage Vasiṣṭha then spoke to elderly Brahmans well-versed in ritual acts as well as to elderly and most pious Brahmans, skilled in architecture

---

* In the Kalpa-Sūtras we read: 'संवत्सरान्ते दीक्षेत' (One should consecrate oneself for a horse-sacrifice at the end of a year (after the letting loose of the sacrificial horse).

(realting to sacrifices), as also to servants engaged for the whole sacrificial session, artists, carpenters, those entrusted with the work of digging the sacrificial pits, astronomers and artisans, nay; even to actors and dancers and likewise to pure-minded men well-versed in secred lore and to those whose knowledge extended over a very wide range of subjects,:— "Undertake you your (respective) duties connected with the sacrifice under orders of His Majesty. (6—8) Let bricks be speedily brought in many thousands and palaces befitting a monarch and equipped with many articles of food and drink etc. built. (9) And good houses for the Brahmans, strongly built and well provided with manifold edibles (such as fruits) and articles of food and drink be erected in hundreds. (10) Similarly spacious dwellings and wells etc. should be constructed for the citizens too and mansions should be built separately for (feudatory) princes expected to arrive from long distances. (11) Similarly stables should be erected for the horses and stalls for the elephants (of royal visitors) and dormitories (for the public) and big houses for warriors belonging to other states as well as for those of our own territory. (12) The houses should (all) be provided with abundant edibles and equipped with all desired objects and excellent food should be provided to the citizens as well as to those hailling from the countryside respectfully in accordance with the scriptural ordinance but never in a wanton way, so that members of all the grades of society may receive hospitality with due honour. (13-14) And no disrespect should be shown (to anyone) even under the impulse of passion and anger. Nay, hospitality should be shown in a special degree in order of seniority to those men and artisans who may remain engrossed with their duties connected with the sacrifice. See that everything connected with all those who are duly honoured with riches (gifts of money) and food is fully accomplished and nothing remains undone. (Therefore) with a mind full of love, act you (all) in such a way as to ensure this." (15—17)

ततः सर्वे समागम्य वसिष्ठमिदमब्रुवन् । यथेष्टं तत् सुविहितं न किंचित् परिहीयते ॥१८॥
यथोक्तं तत् करिष्यामो न किंचित् परिहास्यते । ततः सुमन्त्रमाहूय वसिष्ठो वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥१९॥
निमन्त्रयस्व नृपतीन् पृथिव्यां ये च धार्मिकाः । ब्राह्मणान् क्षत्रियान् वैश्यान्शूद्रांश्चैव सहस्रशः ॥२०॥
समानयस्व सत्कृत्य सर्वदेशेषु मानवान् । मिथिलाधिपतिं शूरं जनकं सत्यवादिनम् ॥२१॥
तमानय महाभागं स्वयमेव सुसत्कृतम् । पूर्वं सम्बन्धिनं ज्ञात्वा ततः पूर्वं ब्रवीमि ते ॥२२॥

Approaching Vasiṣṭha, (they) all thereupon spoke to him as follows:— "Everything will be duly executed as desired (by you); nothing will remain undone. (18) We shall do it as enjoined (by you) and nothing will be wanting." Summoning Sumantra, Vasiṣṭha then spoke (to him) as follows:—(19) "Invite kings, (nay) whoever on earth are pious, as well as Brahmans, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras in thousands. (20) Bring together men (other than those specified in the foregoing verse) from all lands, treating them with honour. (Nay) bring yourself with great respect from Mithilā the celebrated and highly blessed Janaka, the heroic and truthful king of Mithilā, first of all. I make this suggestion to you, knowing him to be a predetermined relation (of the emperor, as the prospective father-in-law of his sons). (21-22)

तथा काशिपतिं स्निग्धं सततं प्रियवादिनम् । सद्वृत्तं देवसंकाशं स्वयमेवानयस्व ह ॥२३॥
तथा केकयराजानं वृद्धं परमधार्मिकम् । श्वशुरं राजसिंहस्य सपुत्रं तमिहानय ॥२४॥
अङ्गेश्वरं महेष्वासं रोमपादं सुसत्कृतम् । वयस्यं राजसिंहस्य सपुत्रं तमिहानय ॥२५॥

तथा कोसलराजानं भानुमन्तं सुसत्कृतम् । मगधाधिपतिं शूरं सर्वशास्त्रविशारदम् ॥२६॥
प्राप्तिज्ञं परमोदारं सत्कृतं पुरुषर्षभम् ।
राज्ञः शासनमादाय चोदयस्व नृपर्षभान् । प्राचीनान् सिन्धुसौवीरान् सौराष्ट्रेयांश्च पार्थिवान् ॥२७॥
दाक्षिणात्यान् नरेन्द्रांश्च समस्तानानयस्व ह । सन्ति स्निग्धाश्च ये चान्ये राजानः पृथिवीतले ॥२८॥
तानानय यथा क्षिप्रं सानुगान् सहबान्धवान् । एतान् दूतैर्महाभागैरानयस्व नृपाज्ञया ॥२९॥

"Also bring personally the friendly and god-like ruler of (the kingdom of) Kāśi, who ever speaks kindly, they say, and possesses a noble character. (23) Similarly bring here the celebrated and extremely pious king of the Kekayas, the aged father-in-law of Daśaratha (a very lion among kings), as well as his son. (24) (Also) bring here with great respect King Romapāda, the ruler of the Angas, a well-known friend of our lion-like sovereign and the wielder of a mighty bow, along with his son. (25) Likewise bring most respectfully Bhānumān, the king of Kosala, and with (due) honour Prāptijña, the heroic and supremely large-hearted ruler of Magadha the foremost among men and well-versed in all sacred lore. Taking the orders of His Majesty, invite the eminent rulers of the eastern territories as well as the monarchs of the Sindhusauvira and Saurashtra. (26-27) Further bring all the rulers of the south and duly get together apace whatever other friendly monarchs there are on the surface of the earth, along with their followers and relations. Get these through highly distinguished ambassadors under orders of His Majestya." (28-29)

वसिष्ठवाक्यं तच्छ्रुत्वा सुमन्त्रस्त्वरितं तदा । व्यादिशत् पुरुषांस्तत्र राज्ञामानयने शुभान् ॥३०॥
स्वयमेव हि धर्मात्मा प्रयातो मुनिशासनात् । सुमन्त्रस्त्वरितो भूत्वा समानेतुं महामतिः ॥३१॥
ते च कर्मान्तिकाः सर्वे वसिष्ठाय महर्षये । सर्वं निवेदयन्ति स्म यज्ञे यदुपकल्पितम् ॥३२॥
ततः प्रीतो द्विजश्रेष्ठस्तान् सर्वान् मुनिरब्रवीत् । अवज्ञया न दातव्यं कस्यचिल्लीलयापि वा ॥३३॥
अवज्ञया कृतं हन्याद् दातारं नात्र संशयः ।

Hearing the aforementioned command of Vasiṣṭha on that occasion, Sumantra hastily charged capable men with the aforesaid duty of bringing monarchs. (30) (Nay) under orders of the sage the highly intelligent Sumantra, whose mind was given to piety, personally departed with haste to bring with honour those who had been specially marked out by Vasiṣṭha (for being brought personally by Sumantra). (31) Nay, all those who had been employed to work (for the sacrifice) till the end reported to the eminent sage Vasiṣṭha whatever had been accomplished in connection with the sacrifice. (32) Pleased with their report, the sage (Vasiṣṭha), the foremost of the Brahmans, then said to them all, "No gift should be made to anyone with disrespect or even with irreverence. (33) A gift made with contumely brings ruin to the donor: there is no doubt about it."

ततः कैश्चिदहोरात्रैरुपयाता महीक्षितः ॥३४॥
बहूनि रत्नान्यादाय राज्ञो दशरथस्य ह । ततो वसिष्ठः सुप्रीतो राजानमिदमब्रवीत् ॥३५॥
उपयाता नरव्याघ्र राजानस्तव शासनात् । मयापि सत्कृताः सर्वे यथार्हं राजसत्तम ॥३६॥
यज्ञियं च कृतं सर्वं पुरुषैः सुसमाहितैः । निर्यातु च भवान् यष्टुं यज्ञायतनमन्तिकात् ॥३७॥
सर्वकामैरुपहृतैरुपेतं वै समन्ततः । द्रष्टुमर्हसि राजेन्द्र मनसेव विनिर्मितम् ॥३८॥
तथा वसिष्ठवचनादृष्यशृङ्गस्य चोभयोः । दिवसे शुभनक्षत्रे निर्यातो जगतीपतिः ॥३९॥

ततो वसिष्ठप्रमुखाः सर्वे एव द्विजोत्तमाः । ऋष्यशृङ्गं पुरस्कृत्य यज्ञकर्मारभंस्तदा ॥४०॥
यज्ञवाटं गताः सर्वे यथाशास्त्रं यथाविधि । श्रीमांश्च सह पत्नीभी राजा दीक्षामुपाविशत् ॥४१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे त्रयोदशः सर्गः ॥ १३ ॥

Some days after the departure of Sumantra and others (a number of) kings arrived with many valuable presents (in the form of jewels, pearls, articles of wearing apparel, ornaments etc.) for Emperor Daśaratha: so the tradition goes. Highly pleased at their arrival, Vasiṣṭha spoke to the king as follows:— (34–35) "Kings have arrived at your command, O tiger among men ! Nay, all have been received with hospitality according to their deserts by me, O jewel among monarchs ! Moreover, everything connected with the sacrifice has been got ready by your men with great attention. Therefore, proceed you to the sacrificial hall close by to commence the sacrifice. (36-37) Be pleased, O king of kings, to inspect the hall, which is furnished on every side with all the desired objects got together (by your men) and looks as if erected by your (mere) wish." (38) On the recommendation of both the sages Vasiṣṭha and Ṛṣyaśṛnga Daśaratha (the ruler of the earth) accordingly proceeded (to the sacrificial hall) on a day marked with a propitious constellation. (39) Having reached the sacrificial hall in a body, placing Ṛṣyaśṛnga at their head, all the foremost Brahmans with Vasiṣṭha as their leader (Āchārya) then commenced the sacrifice according to the scriptural ordinance in the prescribed order the same day. Nay, the glorious emperor with his consorts went through the (ceremony of) consecration (in order to qualify themselves for the sacrificial performance). (40-41)

Thus ends Canto Thirteen in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुर्दशः सर्गः

Canto XIV

King Daśaratha proceeds with the horse-sacrifice; Ṛṣyaśṛnga grants him a boon regarding the birth of four sons.

अथ संवत्सरे पूर्णे तस्मिन् प्राप्ते तुरंगमे । सरय्वाश्चोत्तरे तीरे राज्ञो यज्ञोऽभ्यवर्तत ॥ १ ॥
ऋष्यशृङ्गं पुरस्कृत्य कर्म चक्रुर्द्विजर्षभाः । अश्वमेधे महायज्ञे राज्ञोऽस्य सुमहात्मनः ॥ २ ॥
कर्म कुर्वन्ति विधिवद् याजका वेदपारगाः । यथाविधि यथान्यायं परिक्रामन्ति शास्त्रतः ॥ ३ ॥
प्रवर्ग्यं शास्त्रतः कृत्वा तथैवोपसदं द्विजाः । चक्रुश्च विधिवत् सर्वमधिकं कर्म शास्त्रतः ॥ ४ ॥

The aforementioned horse having returned on the completion of a twelve-month after its release, the (horse-) sacrifice commenced on the northern bank of the Sarayu. (1) Placing Ṛṣyaśṛnga at their head (as the arch-priest or Brahmā, whose function is to supervise a sacrifice, the other three priests officiating at a sacrifice being severally known by the names of Hotā, Adhwaryu and Udgātā), the foremost among the Brahmans discharged their functions in the great Aśwamedha sacrifice started by this exceptionally noble-minded monarch. (2) The priests officiating at the sacrifice, who had (all) mastered the Vedas, duly performed their (respective) duties and proceeded according to the scriptural ordinance abiding by the procedure (laid down in the Kalpa-Sūtras) and following the order of sequence given in the Mīmāṃsā-Śāstra. (3) Having gone through the rite known by the name of Pravargya (auxiliary to a horse-sacrifice, in which fresh milk is poured into a heated vessel called Mahāvīra or Gharma, or into boiling ghee) as well as through the Iṣṭi (a minor sacrifice) called Upasada, according to the scriptural ordinance, the Brahmans (also) duly performed every (additional) rite (even) beyond the (express) injunctions of the Śāstras. (4)

अभिपूज्य तदा हृष्टाः सर्वे चक्रुर्यथाविधि । प्रातस्सवनपूर्वाणि कर्माणि मुनिपुंगवाः ॥ ५ ॥
ऐन्द्रश्च विधिवद् दत्तो राजा चाभिषुतोऽनघः । माध्यंदिनं च सवनं प्रावर्तत यथाक्रमम् ॥ ६ ॥
तृतीयसवनं चैव राज्ञोऽस्य सुमहात्मनः । चक्रुस्ते शास्त्रतो दृष्ट्वा यथा ब्राह्मणपुंगवाः ॥ ७ ॥
आह्वयांचक्रिरे तत्र शक्रादीन् विबुधोत्तमान् । ऋष्यशृङ्गादयो मन्त्रैः शिक्षाक्षरसमन्वितैः ॥ ८ ॥
गीतिभिर्मधुरैः स्निग्धैर्मन्त्राह्वानैर्यथार्हतः । होतारो ददुरावाह्य हविर्भागान् दिवौकसाम् ॥ ९ ॥
न चाहुतमभूत् तत्र स्खलितं वा न किंचन । दृश्यते ब्रह्मवत् सर्वं क्षेमयुक्तं हि चक्रिरे ॥१०॥

Offering worship to the gods (sought to be propitiated through the various rites), all the eminent sages (officiating at the sacrifice) duly performed, full of delight on the said occasion, the rites commencing from the morning Savana (act of pressing out the Soma juice). (5) The oblation intended for Indra (the lord of paradise) was duly offered (to him) and the creeper* known by the name of Soma (the king of herbs), that drives away (all) sin, was crushed (and its sap extracted). And the midday Savana was set on foot in due order. (6) Ascertaining the procedure by reference to the Śāstras, those jewels among the Brāhmans further duly conducted the third Savana on behalf of this exceptionally noble-minded monarch. (7) Through incantations marked with letter-sounds the correct pronunciation and intonation of which was picked up during the period of their study, Ṛṣyaśṛnga and others invoked the presence in that sacrificial hall of the foremost of gods headed by Indra (the ruler of gods). (8) Invoking them by means of charming invocatory Mantras (sacred texts) sweetened with songs of praise, the Hotās (priests whose function is to invoke the gods at a sacrifice) offered oblations to the gods (the denizens of heaven) according to their rank. (9) In that sacrifice no oblation was wrongly offered nor was any rite omitted through ignorance; for every item was seen accompanied (with the uttering of) a Mantra and the priests did everything in such a way as to avoid transgressions in the matter of procedure. (10)

न तेष्वहस्सु श्रान्तो वा क्षुधितो वा न दृश्यते । नाविद्वान् ब्राह्मणः कश्चिन्नाशतानुचरस्तथा ॥११॥
ब्राह्मणा भुञ्जते नित्यं नाथवन्तश्च भुञ्जते । तापसा भुञ्जते चापि श्रमणाश्चैव भुञ्जते ॥१२॥
वृद्धाश्च व्याधिताश्चैव स्त्रीबालाश्च तथैव च । अनिशं भुञ्जमानानां न तृप्तिरुपलभ्यते ॥१३॥
दीयतां दीयतामन्नं वासांसि विविधानि च । इति संचोदितास्तत्र तथा चक्रुरनेकशः ॥१४॥
अन्नकूटाश्च दृश्यन्ते बहवः पर्वतोपमाः । दिवसे दिवसे तत्र सिद्धस्य विधिवत् तदा ॥१५॥

---

* We read in the Kalpa-Sūtras on the subject:—

'सोम राजानं दृषदि निधाय……'दृषद्भिरभिहन्यात्'

"Placing the creeper known by the name of King Soma on a slab of stone one should crush it by means of other stones."

नानादेशादनुप्राप्ताः पुरुषाः स्त्रीगणास्तथा । अन्नपानैः सुविहितास्तस्मिन् यज्ञे महात्मनः ॥१६॥
अन्नं हि विधिवत् स्वादु प्रशंसन्ति द्विजर्षभाः । अहो तृप्ताः स्म भद्रं ते इति शुश्राव राघवः ॥१७॥
स्वलंकृताश्च पुरुषा ब्राह्मणान् पर्यवेषयन् । उपासन्ते च तानन्ये सुमृष्टमणिकुण्डलाः ॥१८॥

During those days (when the sacrifice was in progress) no priest officiating at the sacrifice was seen exhausted (too tired to carry on his duties) or hungry (or even thirsty) and there was no Brahman (particularly in that sacrifice) who was not learned and did not have (at least) a hundred attendants (pupils). (11) The Brahmans (as well as the members of the other twice-born classes) took their food every day and so did the members of the servant class (the Śūdras and so on). The ascetics (the Brahmachārīs and the Vānaprasthas) also took their meals (under the auspices of the sacrifice) and so did the recluses too as well as the aged and the diseased as also women and children. (The dishes were so delicious that) no satiety was observed in the latter, even though they were fed day and night. (12–13) Pressed (by men at the helm of affairs) in the words "Let food be given again and again and (also) articles of wearing apparel of various kinds !" many men in that sacrifice did as they were told (freely gave away food and raiment). (14) Numerous heaps, resembling mountains of ricé cooked from day to day in the traditional way were seen on that occasion on the sacrificial grounds. (15) The men as well as the hosts of women that had arrived from different lands were fully entertained at that sacrificial performance of the high-souled emperor. (16) The noble Brahmans spoke well of the food (they ate) as indeed cooked in the proper way and tasteful (too) and Daśaratha (a scion of Raghu) heard them saying, "Oh, we are (fully) sated. May good betide you !" (17) Nay, men richly adorned served food to the Brahmans, while others decked with ear-rings made of highly polished gems waited upon the former (in their turn). (18)

कर्मान्तरे तदा विप्रा हेतुवादान् बहूनपि । प्राहुः सुवाग्मिनो धीराः परस्परजिगीषया ॥१९॥
दिवसे दिवसे तत्र संस्तरे कुशला द्विजाः । सर्वकर्माणि चक्रुस्ते यथाशास्त्रं प्रचोदिताः ॥२०॥
नाषडङ्गविदत्रासीन्नाव्रतो नाबहुश्रुतः । सदस्यस्तस्य वै राज्ञो नावादकुशलो द्विजः ॥२१॥

During the interval between two Savanas (act of pressing out the Soma juice) on that occasion intelligent and highly eloquent Brahmans put forward many reasoned arguments with the intention of getting the better of one another. (19) From day to day in that sacrifice the aforesaid expert Brahmans discharged all the functions according to the scriptural ordinance as directed (by the elders). (20) No Brahman holding the office of a Sadasya (whose duties are merely to look on and correct mistakes) in this sacrificial performance of that monarch (King Daśaratha) was not conversant with the six branches of knowledge auxiliary to the Vedas (*viz*, 1–Śikṣā or Phonetics, 2–Vyākaraṇa or Grammar, 3–Chhandas or Prosody, 4–Nirukta or Etymology, 5–Jyautiṣa or Astronomy and 6–Kalpa or the science which prescribes the ritual and gives rules for ceremonial or sacrificial acts), did not observe sacred vows and was not very learned or not skilled in argument. (21)

प्राप्ते यूपोच्छ्रये तस्मिन् षड् बैल्वाः खादिरास्तथा । तावन्तो बिल्वसहिताः पर्णिनश्च तथा परे ॥२२॥
श्लेष्मातकमयो दिष्टो देवदारुमयस्तथा । द्वावेव तत्र विहितौ बाहुव्यस्तपरिग्रहौ ॥२३॥
कारिताः सर्व एवैते शास्त्रज्ञैर्यज्ञकोविदैः । शोभार्थं तस्य यज्ञस्य काञ्चनालंकृता भवन् ॥२४॥

एकविंशतियूपास्ते एकविंशत्यरत्नयः । वासोभिरेकविंशद्भिरेकैकं समलंकृताः ॥२५॥
विन्यस्ता विधिवत् सर्वे शिल्पिभिः सुकृता दृढाः । अष्टास्रयः सर्वं एव श्लक्ष्णरूपसमन्विताः ॥२६॥
आच्छादितास्ते वासोभिः पुष्पैर्गन्धैश्च पूजिताः । सप्तर्षयो दीप्तिमन्तो विराजन्ते यथा दिवि ॥२७॥

When the time arrived for erecting the sacrificial pillars, there came to be set up in that sacrifice six pillars of Bilva wood, an equal number of Khadira, each by the side of a Bilva one, and six more of Palāśa. (22) One pillar of Śleṣmātaka is recommended and so are recommended pillars of deodar (the Himalayan cedar). Two only of such pillars (of deodar) are recommended in the aforesaid sacrifice (*viz*, Aśwamedha) and they should stand at a distance of six feet from one another. (23) All these had been got ready (beforehand) under the directions of those well-versed in the scriptures and proficient in the sacrificial technique and had been plated with gold for gracing the sacrifice. (24) Those twenty-one pillars were twenty-one spans high and had been duly adorned (covered) with as many pieces of cloth, each with one. (25) Having been beautifully shaped by carpenters, they were all strong and had been fixed according to the scriptural ordinance. (Nay) they were all octangular and had been provided with a smooth surface. (26) Covered with pieces of cloth and worshipped with flowers and sandal-pastes, they shone bright as the constellation known by the name of the Great Bear (presided over by the seven Ṛṣis) in the heavens. (27)

इष्टकाश्च यथान्यायं कारिताश्च प्रमाणतः । चितोऽग्निर्ब्राह्मणैस्तत्र कुशलैः शिल्पकर्मणि ॥२८॥
स चित्यो राजसिंहस्य संचितः कुशलैर्द्विजैः । गरुडो रुक्मपक्षो वै त्रिगुणोऽष्टादशात्मकः ॥२९॥
नियुक्तास्तत्र पशवस्तत्तदुद्दिश्य दैवतम् । उरगाः पक्षिणश्चैव यथाशास्त्र प्रचोदिताः ॥३०॥
शामित्रे तु हयस्तत्र तथा जलचराश्च ये । ऋषिभिः सर्वमेवैतन्नियुक्तं शास्त्रतस्तदा ॥३१॥
पशूनां त्रिशतं तत्र यूपेषु नियतं तदा । अश्वरत्नोत्तमं तत्र राज्ञो दशरथस्य ह ॥३२॥

The bricks had been made according to the measurements given in the scriptures and with them was the sacrificial altar constructed by priests skilled in the architecture pertaining to sacrifices. (28) The sacrificial fire meant for that altar and going to be worshipped by Daśaratha (a lion among kings) was placed with due ceremony by expert Brahmans. (According to the shape of the altar in which the fire was placed) the fire resembled (in shape) a figure of Garuḍa (with his wings and tail distended and looking downward facing the east) with wings of gold (due to the sides of the pit having been constructed with bricks of gold). Being treble in size as compared to ordinary altars, it consisted of eighteen sacrificial pits (an ordinary altar comprising six only). (29) Beasts, serpents and birds too, ordained by scriptural injunctions, had been tied down to those pillars for being offered to particular gods. (30) The (sacrificial) horse as well as the aquatic creatures (turtle etc.) that had been brought there for the act of sacrifice, all these were bound that (very) moment by the seers (priests) according to the scriptural ordinance. (31) Three hundred beasts were tied down at that time to the aforesaid pillars; the foremost of the best horses belonging to King Daśaratha (too), they say, was tied down there. (32)

कौसल्या तं हयं तत्र परिचर्य समन्ततः । कृपाणैर्विससारैनं त्रिभिः परमया मुदा ॥३३॥
पतत्रिणा तदा सार्धं सुस्थितेन च चेतसा । अवसद् रजनीमेकां कौसल्या धर्मकाम्यया ॥३४॥

होता वर्युस्तथोद्गाता हयेन समयोजयन् । महिष्या परिवृत्त्याथ वावातामपरां तथा ॥३५॥
पर्ता ,णस्तस्य वपामुद्धृत्य नियतेन्द्रियः । ऋत्विक् परमसम्पन्नः श्रपयामास शास्त्रतः ॥३६॥
धूमगन्धं वपायास्तु जिघ्रति स्म नराधिपः । यथाकालं यथान्यायं निर्णुदन् पापमात्मनः ॥३७॥

Consecrating the said horse on all sides (by sprinkling it with water and so on) there, Kausalyā (as also the other queens) touched it with great joy with three swords. (33) Nay, with intent to acquire religious merit Kausalyā then spent one night with the said horse (swift as Garuḍa, the king of the winged creation) with a perfectly composed mind. (34) (The four arch-priests* officiating at the sacrifice, *viz*,) the Hotā, the Adhwaryu, the Udgātā and the Brahmā then (at the close of the night) caused the king's second wife† (ordinarily belonging to the Vaiśya class and bearing the generic name of Vāvātā) along with the first wife (bearing the class-name of Mahiṣī) as well as the third wife (known by the class-name of Parivṛtti) to be brought into contact with the horse. (35) Taking out the edible part of the tuber known by the name of Aśwakanda (or Aśwagandhā, the plant *Physalis flexuosa*), the (chief) priest, who had (duly) controlled his senses and possessed great skill in performing sacrificial rites, cooked it according to the scriptural ordinance. (36) The king smelt at the proper time according to the scriptural ordinance the odour of the steam of the tuber, driving away (thereby) his sin (standing in the way of his getting a son). (37)

हयस्य यानि चाङ्गानि तानि सर्वाणि ब्राह्मणाः । अग्नौ प्रास्यन्ति विधिवत् समस्ताः षोडशर्त्विजः ॥३८॥
प्लक्षशाखासु यज्ञानामन्येषां क्रियते हविः । अश्वमेधस्य यज्ञस्य वैतसो भाग इष्यते ॥३९॥
त्र्यहोऽश्वमेधः संख्यातः कल्पसूत्रेण ब्राह्मणैः । चतुष्टोममहस्तस्य प्रथमं परिकल्पितम् ॥४०॥
उक्थ्यं द्वितीयं संख्यातमतिरात्रं तथोत्तरम् । कारितास्तत्र बहवो विहिताः शास्त्रदर्शनात् ॥४१॥
ज्योतिष्टोमायुषी चैवमतिरात्रौ च निर्मितौ । अभिजिद्विश्वजिच्चैवमाप्तोर्यामो महाक्रतुः ॥४२॥

All the sixteen Brahman priests (taking part in the sacrificial performances) in a body cast into the (sacrificial) fire with due ceremony all the articles worth consigning into the fire as parts of a horse-sacrifice. (38)

---

* Of the four priests mentioned above, the Hotā invokes the gods at a sacrifice, reciting the Ṛgveda; the Adhwaryu's duty is to measure the ground, to build the altar, to collect and arrange the sacrificial vessels, to fetch wood and water, to light the fire and so on, repeating the texts of the Yajurveda while doing so; the Udgātā chants the hymns of the Sāmaveda; while the duty of the Brahmā, who is required to be the most learned of them all and is expected to know all the Vedas, is to supervise the sacrifice.

† The kings in ancient India generally had three wives. The first of them, who was required to be a Kṣatriya princess, and was consecrated along with her husband during the ceremony of installation on the throne, bore the generic name of Mahiṣī; the second one, who could be taken from the Vaiśya class, was known by the name of Vāvātā; while the third wife, who could be taken from the Śūdra class, bore the designation of Parivṛtti. In the case of Daśaratha, however, all the three queens, severally known by the names of Kausalyā, Sumitrā and Kaikeyī—were Kṣatriya princesses.

(Whereas) the offering to be made at other sacrifices is placed on the boughs of a Plakṣa tree, that to be made at an Aśwamedha sacrifice is required to be placed on mats of cane. (39) A horse-sacrifice has been declared in the Kalpa-Sūtras as well as in the Brāhmaṇas as having its three days allotted to Savana (the rite of pressing out the Soma juice). Chatuṣṭoma (Jyotiṣṭoma) has been mentioned to be the name of the Savana to be performed on the first (of these three days). (40) The second day's Savana has been named as Ukthya, while that to be performed the next (third) day has been designated as Atirātra. Many (other secondary) sacrifices (too) as enjoined by the Sastraic point of view were performed (by King Daśaratha) on that occasion (towards the conclusion of the horse-sacrifice). (41) Jyotiṣṭoma and Āyuṣṭoma, two rounds of Atirātra, Abhijit and Viśwajit and two rounds of Āptoryāma—these were the (eight) great sacrifices performed (on the said occasion). (42)

प्राचीं होत्रे ददौ राजा दिशं स्वकुलवर्धनः । अध्वर्यवे प्रतीचीं तु ब्रह्मणे दक्षिणां दिशम् ॥४३॥
उद्गात्रे तु तथोदीचीं दक्षिणैषा विनिर्मिता । अश्वमेधे महायज्ञे स्वयम्भूविहिते पुरा ॥४४॥
क्रतुं समाप्य तु तदा न्यायतः पुरुषर्षभः । ऋत्विग्भ्यो हि ददौ राजा धरां तां कुलवर्धनः ॥४५॥
एवं दत्त्वा प्रहृष्टोऽभूच्छ्रीमानिक्ष्वाकुनन्दनः । ऋत्विजस्त्वब्रुवन् सर्वे राजानं गतकिल्बिषम् ॥४६॥
भवानेव महीं कृत्स्नामेको रक्षितुमर्हति । न भूम्या कार्यमस्माकं नहि शक्ताः स्म पालने ॥४७॥
रताः स्वाध्यायकरणे वयं नित्यं हि भूमिप । निष्क्रयं किंचिदेवेह प्रयच्छतु भवानिति ॥४८॥
मणिरत्नं सुवर्णं वा गावो यद् वा समुद्यतम् । तत् प्रयच्छ नृपश्रेष्ठ धरण्या न प्रयोजनम् ॥४९॥

(At the conclusion of the sacrifice) the emperor, the promoter of his race, gave away (as Dakṣiṇā or sacrificial fee) the eastern quarter (of the globe) to the Hotā, the western to the Adhwaryu, the southern quarter to the Brahmā and the northern to the Udgātā. Such is the Dakṣiṇā prescribed for the great sacrifice of Aśwamedha, which was performed for the first time by Brahmā (the self-born creator of the universe). (43-44) Having concluded the (great) sacrifice according to the scriptural ordinance, the emperor, a jewel among men and the promoter of his race, actually gave away to the priests (who officiated at the sacrifice) the earth itself (as specified above) on the said occasion. (45) Having made the aforesaid gift, the glorious Daśaratha (a scion of Ikṣwāku) felt extremely delighted. All the priests, however, spoke (as follows) to the sinless king:—(46) "You alone are able to protect the entire globe. We have nothing to do with the earth nor are we able to maintain it. (47) As we are constantly devoted to the prosecution of the study of the Vedas, O protector of the earth, give you anything, whatsoever by way of consideration at this moment. (48) Bestow (on us) some superb gem, gold or cows or whatever may be available, O jewel among the protectors of men ! We have no use for the earth." (49)

एवमुक्तो नरपतिर्ब्राह्मणैर्वेदपारगैः । गवां शतसहस्राणि दश तेभ्यो ददौ नृपः ॥५०॥
दशकोटिं सुवर्णस्य रजतस्य चतुर्गुणम् । ऋत्विजस्तु ततः सर्वे प्रददुः सहिता वसु ॥५१॥
ऋष्यशृङ्गाय मुनये वसिष्ठाय च धीमते । ततस्ते न्यायतः कृत्वा प्रविभागं द्विजोत्तमाः ॥५२॥
सुप्रीतमनसः सर्वे प्रत्यूचुर्मुदिता भृशम् । ततः प्रसर्पकेभ्यस्तु हिरण्यं सुसमाहितः ॥५३॥
जाम्बूनदं कोटिसंख्यं ब्राह्मणेभ्यो ददौ तदा । दरिद्राय द्विजायाथ हस्ताभरणमुत्तमम् ॥५४॥

कस्मैचिद् याचमानाय ददौ राघवनन्दनः । ततः प्रीतेषु विधिवद् द्विजेषु द्विजवत्सलः ॥५५॥
प्रणाममकरोत् तेषां हर्षव्याकुलितेन्द्रियः । तस्याशिषोऽथ विविधा ब्राह्मणैः समुदाहृताः ॥५६॥
उदारस्य नृवीरस्य धरण्यां पतितस्य च । ततः प्रीतमना राजा प्राप्य यज्ञमनुत्तमम् ॥५७॥
पापापहं स्वर्नयनं दुस्तरं पार्थिवर्षभैः । ततोऽब्रवीदृष्यशृङ्गं राजा दशरथस्तदा ॥५८॥
कुलस्य वर्धनं तत् तु कर्तुमर्हसि सुव्रत ।
तथेति च स राजानमुवाच द्विजसत्तमः । भविष्यन्ति सुता राजंश्चत्वारस्ते कुलोद्वहाः ॥५९॥
स तस्य वाक्यं मधुरं निशम्य प्रणम्य तस्मै प्रयतो नृपेन्द्रः ।
जगाम हर्षं परमं महात्मा तमृष्यशृङ्गं पुनरप्युवाच ॥६०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे चतुर्दशः सर्गः ॥ १४ ॥

Told thus by the Brahmans, who were (all) masters of the Vedas, the king, who acknowledged none (other) as his own ruler, bestowed on them ten lakhs of cows, a hundred million gold coins and four times as many silver coins (rupees). Thereupon all the priests combined handed over the (entire) wealth to the sage Ṛṣyaśṛnga and the wise Vasiṣṭha (for equitable distribution). Having had the (whole) wealth equitably divided (through Ṛṣyaśṛnga and Vasiṣṭha), all those eminent Brahmans now felt much delighted at heart and said, "We are highly pleased." Fully composed (in mind), the king then gave away on that (very) occasion ten million gold coins to Brahmans that had come (from outside) to witness the sacrifice. (When no money was left on hand for distribution) Daśaratha (the delight of Raghu's race) promptly gave away one of his excellent bangles to a certain (unknown) indigent Brahman who asked for a gift. The Brahmans having been duly propitiated, the king, who was (so) fond of the Brahmans and whose senses were (all) excited through joy, offered salutation to them. On that magnanimous soul, a hero among men, lying prostrate on the ground, benedictions of various kinds were forthwith pronounced in suitable words by the Brahmans. The king now felt delighted at heart to have succeeded in completing the sacrifice, unsurpassed by another, which was capable of dispelling sins (that stood in the way of his getting a male progeny) and transporting him to heaven and was hard to carry through (even) for the foremost of kings. King Daśaratha then said to Ṛṣyaśṛnga on that (very) occasion :—(50–58) "Be pleased, O sage of auspicious vows, to do further that which may tend to promote my race." "I shall do accordingly," replied that jewel among the Brahmans to the king, "so that four such sons will be born to you as will propagate your race." (59) That high-souled and piously-disposed emperor experienced great joy to hear his sweet assurance and, bowing low to him, reiterated his prayer to the celebrated Ṛṣyaśṛnga. (60)

Thus ends Canto Fourteen in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चदशः सर्गः

Canto XV

Ṛṣyaśṛnga conducts a sacrifice for securing the birth of sons to Daśaratha; the gods approach Brahmā in that very sacrifice with a prayer for bringing about the death of Rāvaṇa; Brahmā implores Lord Viṣṇu (also present there) to descend in the house of Daśaratha and do away with Rāvaṇa and the Lord undertakes to kill Rāvaṇa.

मेधावी तु ततो ध्यात्वा स किंचिदिदमुत्तरम् । लब्धसंज्ञस्ततस्तं तु वेदज्ञो नृपमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
इष्टिं तेऽहं करिष्यामि पुत्रीयां पुत्रकारणात् । अथर्वशिरसि प्रोक्तैर्मन्त्रैः सिद्धां विधानतः ॥ २ ॥
ततः प्राक्रमदिष्टिं तां पुत्रीयां पुत्रकारणात् । जुहावाग्नौ च तेजस्वी मन्त्रदृष्टेन कर्मणा ॥ ३ ॥
ततो देवाः सगन्धर्वाः सिद्धाश्च परमर्षयः । भागप्रतिग्रहार्थं वै समवेता यथाविधि ॥ ४ ॥
ताः समेत्य यथान्यायं तस्मिन् सदसि देवताः । अब्रुवँल्लोककर्तारं ब्रह्माणं वचनं ततः ॥ ५ ॥

Having deeply pondered a little then as to what should be done next and presently becoming conscious (of his surrounding), the highly intelligent Ṛṣyaśṛnga, well-versed in the Vedas, spoke to King Daśaratha as follows:—(1) "For the sake of securing sons to you I shall duly perform a sacrifice capable of procuring a male progeny and well-known for its unfailing effect with the help of Mantras (sacred texts) taught in the Atharva-Veda." (2) For securing (the birth of four) sons (to Daśaratha) the glorious Ṛṣyaśṛnga forthwith commenced the said sacrifice capable of procuring a male progeny, and poured oblations into the (sacred) fire according to the procedure shown in the sacred texts. (3) The (various) gods (including Brahmā) accompanied by Gandharvas (celestial musicians), Siddhas (a class of semi-divine beings naturally endowed with mystic powers), and the greatest of seers assembled there to accept in person their share of offerings according to the (established) procedure. (4) Approaching Brahmā, the maker of the universe, in that (very) assembly (congregated for the sacrifice) according to their (respective) rank (of course unperceived by mortal men), the aforesaid divinities presently addressed the following prayer (to him):—(5)

भगवंस्त्वत्प्रसादेन रावणो नाम राक्षसः । सर्वान् नो बाधते वीर्याच्छासितुं तं न शक्नुमः ॥ ६ ॥
त्वया तस्मै वरो दत्तः प्रीतेन भगवंस्तदा । मानयन्तश्च तं नित्यं सर्वं तस्य क्षमामहे ॥ ७ ॥
उद्वेजयति लोकांस्त्रीनुच्छ्रितान् द्वेष्टि दुर्मतिः । शक्रं त्रिदशराजानं प्रधर्षयितुमिच्छति ॥ ८ ॥
ऋषीन् यक्षान् सगन्धर्वान् ब्राह्मणानसुरांस्तथा । अतिक्रामति दुर्धर्षो वरदानेन मोहितः ॥ ९ ॥
नैन सूर्यः प्रतपति पार्श्वे वाति न मारुतः । चलोर्मिमाली तं दृष्ट्वा समुद्रोऽपि न कम्पते ॥१०॥
तन्महन्नो भयं तस्माद् राक्षसाद् घोरदर्शनात् । वधार्थं तस्य भगवन्नुपायं कर्तुमर्हसि ॥११॥

"By dint of the prowess acquired through your grace, O lord, the ogre named Rāvaṇa is molesting us all. We cannot subdue him. (6) A boon was conferred on him by you while he was practising austerities, O lord, pleased as you were (with him). And respecting it (as we do), we have always brooked all his wrong doings. (7) The evil-minded fellow is harassing (all) the three worlds, hates the exalted (prosperous) and seeks to overpower (even) Indra (the lord of paradise). (8) Infatuated by the boon (conferred by you.) and hard to subdue, he treats profanely Ṛṣis, Yakṣas (a class of demigods) including Gandharvas, the Brahmans and demons. (9) The sun does not scorch him (in midsummer), the wind does not blow (furiously) past him. Seeing him the ocean does not get agitated, though (naturally) consisting of turbulent waves. (10) Therefore we are much afraid of that ogre of frightful aspect. Be pleased, O lord, to devise some means of putting an end to him." (11)

एवमुक्तः सुरैः सर्वैश्चिन्तयित्वा ततोऽब्रवीत् । हन्तायं विदितस्तस्य वधोपायो दुरात्मनः ॥१२॥
तेन गन्धर्वयक्षाणां देवतानां च रक्षसाम् । अवध्योऽस्मीति वागुक्ता तथेत्युक्तं च तन्मया ॥१३॥
नाकीर्तयदवज्ञानात् तद् रक्षो मानुषांस्तदा । तस्मात् स मानुषाद् वध्यो मृत्युर्नान्योऽस्य विद्यते॥१४॥
एतच्छ्रुत्वा प्रियं वाक्यं ब्रह्मणा समुदाहृतम् । देवा महर्षयः सर्वे प्रहृष्टास्तेऽभवंस्तदा ॥१५॥
एतस्मिन्नन्तरे विष्णुरुपयातो महाद्युतिः । शङ्खचक्रगदापाणिः पीतवासा जगत्पतिः ॥१६॥
वैनतेयं समारुह्य भास्करस्तोयदं यथा । तप्तहाटककेयूरो वन्द्यमानः सुरोत्तमैः ॥१७॥
ब्रह्मणा च समागत्य तत्र तस्थौ समाहितः । तमब्रुवन् सुराः सर्वे समभिष्टूय संनताः ॥१८॥

Pondering (awhile) when prayed to thus by all the gods, Brahmā now said, "I am glad the means of despatching that evil-minded fellow has come to my mind. (12) 'Let me prove incapable of being killed by the Gandharvas and Yakṣas, gods and ogres !' This was the prayer addressed by him (to me) and 'So be it !' were the words uttered by me then. (13) The said ogre did not mention human beings on that occasion out of contempt (for them). Therefore he is capable of being killed by a human-being (alone); otherwise there is no death for him." (14) All the divinities and great Ṛṣis mentioned above felt supremely delighted at that moment to hear this happy revelation communicated by Brahmā. (15) In the meantime arrived (there), riding on (the back of) Garuḍa (the king of birds) as the sun on a cloud, the extremely resplendent Viṣṇu, the Lord of the universe, clad in yellow and wielding a conch, discus and mace in His hands, (nay) decked with a pair of armlets of refined gold and being glorified by the foremost of gods. (16-17) Nay, meeting Brahmā, He took His position there (in that assembly) composed in mind. Duly extolling Him and bent low (in reverence), all the gods prayed to Him (as follows) :—(18)

त्वां नियोक्ष्यामहे विष्णो लोकानां हितकाम्यया । राज्ञो दशरथस्य त्वमयोध्याधिपतेर्विभो ॥१९॥
धर्मज्ञस्य वदान्यस्य महर्षिसमतेजसः । अस्य भार्यासु तिसृषु ह्रीश्रीकीर्त्युपमासु च ॥२०॥
विष्णो पुत्रत्वमागच्छ कृत्वाऽऽत्मानं चतुर्विधम् । तत्र त्वं मानुषो भूत्वा प्रवृद्धं लोककण्टकम् ॥२१॥
अवध्यं दैवतैर्विष्णो समरे जहि रावणम् । स हि देवान्सगन्धर्वान् सिद्धांश्च ऋषिसत्तमान् ॥२२॥
राक्षसो रावणो मूर्खो वीर्योद्रेकेण बाधते । ऋषयश्च ततस्तेन गन्धर्वाप्सरसस्तथा ॥२३॥
क्रीडन्तो नन्दनवने रौद्रेण विनिपातिताः । वधार्थं वयमायातास्तस्य वै मुनिभिः सह ॥२४॥
सिद्धगन्धर्वयक्षाश्च ततस्त्वां शरणं गताः । त्वं गतिः परमा देव सर्वेषां नः परंतप ॥२५॥
वधाय देवशत्रूणां नृणां लोके मनः कुरु ।

"With intent to ensure the good of the worlds, O Viṣṇu, we are going to lay a burden on you. Splitting Yourself up into four personalities, O all-pervading Lord play You the role of a son to the munificent King Daśaratha, the ruler of Ayodhya,—who knows what is right and is possessed of splendour equivalent to that of great Ṛṣis,—through his three wives (Kausalyā, Sumitrā and Kaikeyī), who are akin to Hrī, Śrī and Kīrti* (daughters of Dakṣa). Appearing in a human semblance through them, O Viṣṇu, (pray) make short work, in an encounter, of Rāvaṇa, the scourge of the world, who has grown very strong and is incapable of being killed by (other) gods. Through excess of prowess that fool of a Rāvaṇa, who has developed the disposition of an ogre, is actually oppressing the gods including the Gandharvas, the Siddhas as well as the noblest of Ṛṣis. Nay, because of such a disposition, Ṛṣis as well as Gandharvas and Apsarās (celestial nymphs) sporting in the Nandana Vana (the pleasure-garden of Indra) were knocked down (from heaven) by that fierce ogre. For getting rid of him we as well as Siddhas, Gandharvas and Yakṣas have come here along with hermits and have sought You as our protector for the same purpose, O Lord ! You are the supreme resort of us all, O Chastiser of foes ! (19—25) (Therefore) make up Your mind to descend into the mortal plane for the destruction of the enemies of gods."

एवं स्तुतस्तु देवेशो विष्णुस्त्रिदशपुंगवः ॥२६॥
पितामहपुरोगांस्तान् सर्वलोकनमस्कृतः । अब्रवीत् त्रिदशान् सर्वान् समेतान् धर्मसंहितान् ॥२७॥
भयं त्यजत भद्रं वो हितार्थं युधि रावणम् । सपुत्रपौत्रं सामात्यं समन्त्रिज्ञातिबान्धवम् ॥२८॥
हत्वा क्रूरं दुराधर्षं देवर्षीणां भयावहम् । दशवर्षसहस्राणि दशवर्षशतानि च ॥२९॥
वत्स्यामि मानुषे लोके पालयन् पृथिवीमिमाम् । एवं दत्त्वा वरं देवो देवानां विष्णुरात्मवान् ॥३०॥
मानुष्ये चिन्तयामास जन्मभूमिमथात्मनः । ततः पद्मपलाशाक्षः कृत्वाऽऽत्मानं चतुर्विधम् ॥३१॥
पितरं रोचयामास तदा दशरथं नृपम् ।
ततो देवर्षिगन्धर्वाः सरुद्राः साप्सरोगणाः । स्तुतिभिर्दिव्यरूपाभिस्तुष्टुवुर्मधुसूदनम् ॥३२॥
तमुद्धतं रावणमुग्रतेजसं प्रवृद्धदर्पं त्रिदशेश्वरद्विषम् ।
विरावणं साधु तपस्विकण्टकं तपस्विनामुद्धर तं भयावहम् ॥३३॥
तमेव हत्वा सबलं सबान्धवं विरावणं रावणमुग्रपौरुषम् ।
स्वर्लोकमागच्छ गतज्वरश्चिरं सुरेन्द्र गुप्तं गतदोषकल्मषम् ॥३४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे पञ्चदशः सर्गः ॥ १५ ॥

Thus extolled (by the gods and others), Lord Viṣṇu, the Ruler of gods and the foremost among them, the adored of all the worlds, addressed (as follows) the assembled gods, headed by Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation), who were all given to piety:—(26-27) "Give up (all) fear. May good betide you ! Despatching on the field of battle in your interests the cruel and formidable Rāvaṇa,—who is difficult to overpower and is the terror of gods and Ṛṣis,—along with his sons and grandsons and including his ministers and counsellors, kinsmen and relations, I shall remain on the mortal plane ruling over this globe for eleven thousand years." Having granted the aforesaid boon, the high-souled Lord Viṣṇu, the adored (even) of gods, now thought of Ayodhya (the place of His projected birth) on the mortal plane. Then splitting

---

* The female deities presiding over modesty, fortune and fame.

Himself up into four personalities, the Lord, whose eyes resemble the petals of a lotus, wished King Daśaratha to be His father in that descent. Thereupon the gods, Ṛṣis and Gandharvas, accompanied by Lord Rudra and bevies of Apsarās, extolled Lord Viṣṇu (the Destroyer of the demon Madhu) by means of hymns depicting His transcendent personality :—(28—32) "(Pray) completely destroy that notorious and arrogant Rāvaṇa, possessed of terrible energy, the enemy of Indra (the ruler of gods), the scourge of ascetics and the terror of hermits, whose vanity knows no bounds and who makes people scream (by his tyranny). (33) Having but killed the aforesaid Rāvaṇa of terrible prowess, who makes people loudly wail (by his tyranny), along with his army and kinsmen, and (thereby) rid of anxiety (for Your devotees), come back, O Ruler of gods, to Heaven (Vaikuṇṭha), Your everlasting abode, guarded by Yourself and free from all impurities in the shape of frailties (like partiality and prejudice)." (34)

Thus ends Canto Fifteen in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षोडशः सर्गः

Canto XVI

A dialogue between Lord Viṣṇu and the gods bearing on Rāvaṇa; on the disappearance of the Lord an attendant of Prajāpati (Lord Viṣṇu, the Protector of all created beings) rises from the sacrificial pit and hands over to Daśaratha a basin containing milk boiled with rice and sugar and the latter divides it among his wives.

ततो नारायणो विष्णुर्नियुक्तः सुरसत्तमैः । जानन्नपि सुरानेवं श्लक्ष्णं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
उपायः को वधे तस्य राक्षसाधिपतेः सुराः । यमहं तं समास्थाय निहन्यामृषिकण्टकम् ॥ २ ॥
एवमुक्ताः सुराः सर्वे प्रत्यूचुर्विष्णुमव्ययम् । मानुषं रूपमास्थाय रावणं जहि संयुगे ॥ ३ ॥
स हि तेपे तपस्तीव्रं दीर्घकालमरिंदम । येन तुष्टोऽभवद् ब्रह्मा लोककृल्लोकपूर्वजः ॥ ४ ॥
संतुष्टः प्रददौ तस्मै राक्षसाय वरं प्रभुः । नानाविधेभ्यो भूतेभ्यो भयं नान्यत्र मानुषात् ॥ ५ ॥
अवज्ञाताः पुरा तेन वरदाने हि मानवाः । एवं पितामहात् तस्माद् वरदानेन गर्वितः ॥ ६ ॥
उत्सादयति लोकांस्त्रीन् स्त्रियश्चाप्युपकर्षति । तस्मात् तस्य वधो दृष्टो मानुषेभ्यः परंतप ॥ ७ ॥

Solicited (thus) by the foremost of the gods, the all-pervading Nārāyaṇa, though knowing everything, thereupon addressed the following sweet words to the gods:—(1) "What can be the device for despatching the aforesaid ruler of the ogres, O gods, by resorting to which I may be able to uproot that thorn in the side of the Ṛṣis ?" (2) Interrogated thus (by the Lord), all the gods replied to the immortal Lord Viṣṇu (as follows):—"Assuming a human semblance, make short work of Rāvaṇa in battle. (3) The fellow indeed practised for a long time, O Chastiser of foes, severe austerities by which Brahmā, the maker of the universe and the progenitor of (all) created beings, got (much) pleased. (4) Highly gratified, Brahmā conferred on that ogre a boon to the effect that he would have no fear from the different species of created beings other than man. (5) At the time of receiving the boon of yore, really speaking, men were treated as of no account (and left out of consideration) by him. Elated thus by the boon received from the aforesaid Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation), he is oppressing (all) the three worlds and carries off womenfolk. Hence his death has been ordained at the hands of man, O Chastiser of foes !" (6–7)

इत्येतद् वचनं श्रुत्वा सुराणां विष्णुरात्मवान् । पितरं रोचयामास तदा दशरथं नृपम् ॥ ८ ॥
स चाप्यपुत्रो नृपतिस्तस्मिन् काले महाद्युतिः । अयजत् पुत्रियामिष्टिं पुत्रेप्सुररिसूदनः ॥ ९ ॥
स कृत्वा निश्चयं विष्णुरामन्त्र्य च पितामहम् । अन्तर्धानं गतो देवैः पूज्यमानो महर्षिभिः ॥१०॥
ततो वै यजमानस्य पावकादतुलप्रभम् । प्रादुर्भूतं महद् भूतं महावीर्यं महाबलम् ॥११॥
कृष्णं रक्ताम्बरधरं रक्तास्यं दुन्दुभिस्वनम् । स्निग्धहर्यक्षतनुजश्मश्रुप्रवरमूर्धजम् ॥१२॥
शुभलक्षणसम्पन्नं दिव्याभरणभूषितम् । शैलशृङ्गसमुत्सेधं दृप्तशार्दूलविक्रमम् ॥१३॥
दिवाकरसमाकारं दीप्तानलशिखोपमम् । तप्तजाम्बूनदमयीं राजतान्तपरिच्छदाम् ॥१४॥
दिव्यपायससम्पूर्णां पात्रीं पत्नीमिव प्रियाम् । प्रगृह्य विपुलां दोर्भ्यां स्वयं मायामयीमिव ॥१५॥

Hearing the aforesaid submission of the gods, the high-souled Lord Viṣṇu then desired King Daśaratha to be His father. (8) Desirous of getting a son, since he had no male issue, the aforesaid monarch too, who was possessed of great splendour and was capable of destroying his foes, performed at that (very) time a sacrifice calculated to procure him a son. (9) Having made up His mind (accordingly) and saying good bye to Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation), the said Lord Viṣṇu disappeared (even) while He was being worshipped by the gods and great Ṛṣis. (10) Then indeed there arose from the fire (known as the Āhavanīya) of the sacrificer an extraordinary being, possessed of matchless splendour and endowed with exceptional prowess and uncommon strength. (11) Dark-complexioned with a ruddy countenance and a voice resembling the sound of a large kettle-drum, he was clad in red and had soft and excellent hair resembling a lion's all over his body, about his lower face and on his upper lip as well as on his head. (12) Invested with auspicious marks (on his body) and decked with celestial jewels, he possessed the height of a mountain-peak and strode like a proud tiger. (13) His figure shone like the sun and he looked like a flame of blazing fire and personally carried in both his arms a large basin of refined gold,—full of ethereal Pāyasa (milk boiled with rice and sugar) and covered with a silver lid, as though a product of magic,—(even) as one would carry one's beloved spouse. (14–15)

समवेक्ष्याब्रवीद् वाक्यमिदं दशरथं नृपम् । प्राजापत्यं नरं विद्धि मामिहाभ्यागतं नृप ॥१६॥
ततः परं तदा राजा प्रत्युवाच कृताञ्जलिः । भगवन् स्वागतं तेऽस्तु किमहं करवाणि ते ॥१७॥
अथो पुनरिदं वाक्यं प्राजापत्यो नरोऽब्रवीत् । राजन्नर्चयता देवानद्य प्राप्तमिदं त्वया ॥१८॥
इदं तु नृपशार्दूल पायसं देवनिर्मितम् । प्रजाकरं गृहाण त्वं धन्यमारोग्यवर्धनम् ॥१९॥
भार्याणामनुरूपाणामश्नीतेति प्रयच्छ वै । तासु त्वं लप्स्यसे पुत्रान् यदर्थं यजसे नृप ॥२०॥

Gazing at King Daśaratha he addressed the following words to him:— "Know me, O protector of men, to be a messenger of Viṣṇu (the Protector of created beings) arrived here (from His realm)." (16) Thereupon the king replied (to him) with joined palms, "May my (hearty) welcome be (acceptable) to you, O divine personage ! What shall I do for you ?" (17) The servant of Lord Viṣṇu now spoke the following words (to him):—"By worshipping the gods (by means of a horse-sacrifice and a sacrifice performed for the sake of a male progeny) has this (reward) been secured by you today, O king ! (18) Receive, O tiger among kings, this Pāyasa prepared by the gods, which is not only capable of procuring a son but is also conducive to wealth and a promoter of health too. (19) Give it to your wives, that are worthy of you (*i. e.*, belonging to your own Varṇa or grade of society and sharing your virtues) with the words "Eat it (all of you) !' Through them (who partake of it) you will secure (four) sons, for whom you have been performing sacrifices, O protector of men !" (20)

तथेति नृपतिः प्रीतः शिरसा प्रतिगृह्य ताम् । पात्रीं देवान्नसम्पूर्णां देवदत्तां हिरण्मयीम् ॥२१॥
अभिवाद्य च तद् भूतमद्भुतं प्रियदर्शनम् । मुदा परमया युक्तश्चकाराभिप्रदक्षिणम् ॥२२॥
ततो दशरथः प्राप्य पायसं देवनिर्मितम् । बभूव परमप्रीतः प्राप्य वित्तमिवाधनः ॥२३॥
ततस्तदद्भुतप्रख्यं भूतं परमभास्वरम् । संवर्तयित्वा तत् कर्म तत्रैवान्तरधीयत ॥२४॥
हर्षरश्मिभिरुद्द्योतं तस्यान्तःपुरमाबभौ । शारदस्याभिरामस्य चन्द्रस्येव नभोंऽशुभिः ॥२५॥
सोऽन्तःपुरं प्रविश्यैव कौसल्यामिदमब्रवीत् । पायसं प्रतिगृह्णीष्व पुत्रीयं त्विदमात्मनः ॥२६॥

Accepting delightfully with his head bent low and with the words "So be it !" the aforesaid gold basin, full of heavenly food and vouchsafed by the Lord, and greeting that extraordinary being of delightful aspect, the king, full of supreme joy, went round him clockwise (as a mark of respect). (21-22) Daśaratha felt highly pleased to secure from him the Pāyasa prepared by the gods, (even) as a pauper would on obtaining riches. (23) Having disposed of that duty (of handing over the Pāyasa to the king), that most effulgent being of wonderful appearance then vanished into the fire itself. (24) Irradiated by beams of joy playing on his countenance, the gynaeceum (to which he now hastened) shone bright like the firmament illumined by the rays of the delightful autumnal (full) moon. (25) Immediately on entering the gynaeceum he spoke to Kausalyā (his eldest wife) as follows—"Accept this Pāyasa, which is indeed calculated to procure you a son." (26)

कौसल्यायै नरपतिः पायसार्धं ददौ तदा । अर्धादर्धं ददौ चापि सुमित्रायै नराधिपः ॥२७॥
कैकेय्यै चावशिष्टार्धं ददौ पुत्रार्थकारणात् । प्रददौ चावशिष्टार्धं पायसस्यामृतोपमम् ॥२८॥
अनुचिन्त्य सुमित्रायै पुनरेव महामतिः । एवं तासां ददौ राजा भार्याणां पायसं पृथक् ॥२९॥
ताश्चैवं पायसं प्राप्य नरेन्द्रस्योत्तमस्त्रियः । सम्मानं मेनिरे सर्वाः प्रहर्षोदितचेतसः ॥३०॥

ततस्तु ताः प्राश्य तदुत्तमस्त्रियो महीपतेरुत्तमपायसं पृथक् ।
हुताशनादित्यसमानतेजसोऽचिरेण गर्भान् प्रतिपेदिरे तदा ॥३१॥
ततस्तु राजा प्रतिवीक्ष्य ताः स्त्रियः प्ररूढगर्भाः प्रतिलब्धमानसः ।
बभूव हृष्टस्त्रिदिवे यथा हरिः सुरेन्द्रसिद्धर्षिगणाभिपूजितः ॥३२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे षोडशः सर्गः ॥ १६ ॥

With the object of getting (them) a son (each), the king then gave half of the Pāyasa to Kausalyā and the emperor made over one half of the other half to Sumitrā (his second wife) too. (27) Again he gave half of the rest to Kaikeyī and, reflecting (awhile), the highly intelligent Daśaratha gave the other half of the nectar-like Pāyasa once more to Sumitrā. In this way the monarch apportioned the Pāyasa separately to all his aforementioned wives. (28-29) All the aforesaid noble wives of the emperor deemed this (apportionment) as a unique honour, their mind enlivened through excessive joy on receiving the Pāyasa. (30) Partaking of the excellent Pāyasa separately the same moment, those noble wives of the emperor actually felt before long by virtue of it the presence (in their womb) of offspring vying in splendour with the fire and the sun. (31) Perceiving the aforesaid queens with offspring in their womb, quickened immediately afterwards, the emperor, who had attained his desired object and was adored by Indra (the ruler of gods), and hosts of Siddhas and Ṛṣis (as the future father of the divine Śrī Rāma), felt delighted (even) as Indra does in heaven. (32)

Thus ends Canto Sixteen in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तदशः सर्गः

Canto XVII

Birth of monkey chiefs from the loins of different gods under the direction of Brahmā

पुत्रत्वं तु गते विष्णौ राज्ञस्तस्य महात्मनः । उवाच देवताः सर्वाः स्वयम्भूर्भगवानिदम् ॥ १ ॥
सत्यसंधस्य वीरस्य सर्वेषां नो हितैषिणः । विष्णोः सहायान् बलिनः सृजध्वं कामरूपिणः ॥ २ ॥
मायाविदश्च शूरांश्च वायुवेगसमाञ्जवे । नयज्ञान् बुद्धिसम्पन्नान् विष्णुतुल्यपराक्रमान् ॥ ३ ॥
असंहार्यानुपायज्ञान् दिव्यसंहननान्वितान् । सर्वास्त्रगुणसम्पन्नानमृतप्राशनानिव ॥ ४ ॥
अप्सरस्सु च मुख्यासु गन्धर्वीणां तनूषु च । यक्षपन्नगकन्यासु ऋक्षविद्याधरीषु च ॥ ५ ॥
किंनरीणां च गात्रेषु वानरीणां तनूषु च । सृजध्वं हरिरूपेण पुत्रांस्तुल्यपराक्रमान् ॥ ६ ॥
पूर्वमेव मया सृष्टो जाम्बवानृक्षपुंगवः । जृम्भमाणस्य सहसा मम वक्त्रादजायत ॥ ७ ॥

Lord Viṣṇu having all but assumed the role of sons to that high-souled monarch (King Daśaratha), the almighty Brahmā (the self-born) commanded all the gods as follows:—(1) "Beget mighty part-manifestations of yourselves, capable of assuming any form at will and able to assist the valiant Lord Viṣṇu, who is true to His promise and wishes well of us all. (2) Through the principal Apsarās (celestial nymphs), the wombs of Gandharva women, maidens of Yakṣas (a class of demigods, ruled over by Kubera) and Nāgas (serpent-demons credited with a human face and serpent-like lower body), she-bears and Vidyādhara women, the wombs of female Kinnaras* and she-monkeys procreate sons in the form of monkeys, equal in strength to you, well-versed in conjuring tricks, gallant, swift as the wind in speed, expert in policy, gifted with intelligence, equal in prowess to Lord Viṣṇu, incapable of being killed (by the enemy), conversant with (various) contrivances, endowed with an ethereal body, skilled in the use and withdrawal etc. of missiles and resembling the gods (that feed on ambrosia). (3—6) Jāmbavān, the chief of bears, has already been begotten by me. He issued forth from my mouth all of a sudden (even) as I was yawning." (7)

---

* A class of demigods with a human figure and the head of a horse or with a horse's body and the head of a human being.

ते तथोक्ता भगवता तत् प्रतिश्रुत्य शासनम् । जनयामासुरेवं ते पुत्रान् वानररूपिणः ॥८॥
ऋषयश्च महात्मानः सिद्धविद्याधरोरगाः । चारणाश्च सुतान् वीरान् ससृजुर्वनचारिणः ॥९॥
वानरेन्द्रं महेन्द्राभमिन्द्रो वालिनमात्मजम् । सुग्रीवं जनयामास तपनस्तपतां वरः ॥१०॥
बृहस्पतिस्त्वजनयत् तारं नाम महाकपिम् । सर्ववानरमुख्यानां बुद्धिमन्तमनुत्तमम् ॥११॥
धनदस्य सुतः श्रीमान् वानरो गन्धमादनः । विश्वकर्मा त्वजनयन्नलं नाम महाकपिम् ॥१२॥
पावकस्य सुतः श्रीमान् नीलोऽग्निसदृशप्रभः । तेजसा यशसा वीर्यादत्यरिच्यत वीर्यवान् ॥१३॥
रूपद्रविणसम्पन्नावश्विनौ रूपसम्मतौ । मैन्दं च द्विविदं चैव जनयामासतुः स्वयम् ॥१४॥
वरुणो जनयामास सुषेणं नाम वानरम् । शरभं जनयामास पर्जन्यस्तु महाबलः ॥१५॥
मारुतस्यौरसः श्रीमान् हनूमान् नाम वानरः । वज्रसंहननोपेतो वैनतेयसमो जवे ॥१६॥
सर्ववानरमुख्येषु बुद्धिमान् बलवानपि ।

Enjoined thus by Brahmā and accepting his aforesaid command, the above-mentioned gods as instructed begot sons in the form of monkeys. (8) Nay, high-souled Ṛṣis, Siddhas, Vidyādharas (artists of heaven) and Nāgas and Chāraṇas (celestial bards) begot heroic sons belonging to the monkey class. (9) Indra (the ruler of gods) begot as his son Vālī, the ruler of monkeys, who vied with the great Indra (himself). The sun-god, the foremost of those radiating heat, begot Sugrīva (the younger brother of Vālī). (10) The sage Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods) begot the mighty monkey, Tāra, unsurpassed in intelligence among all the monkey chiefs. (11) The glorious monkey Gandhamādana was an offspring of Kubera (the bestower of riches); while Viśwakarmā (the architect of gods) begot the mighty monkey named Nala. (12) The glorious and valiant Nīla, a son of the fire-god, who vied in splendour with fire, outdid all in point of glory, renown and prowess. (13) And (the twin-gods) Aświnīkumāras, who are esteemed for their comeliness and rich in the wealth of beauty, themselves begot Mainda as well as Dwivida. (14) Varuṇa (the god of water) begot the monkey named Suṣeṇa; while the mighty Parjanya (the god of rain) begot Sarabha. (15) The glorious monkey named Hanumān is the own son of the wind-god. He is endowed with a body invulnerable as the thunderbolt and vies with Garuḍa (son of Vinatā and the carrier of Lord Viṣṇu) in speed. (16) He is the cleverest and strongest of all monkey chiefs.

ते सृष्टा बहुसाहस्रा दशग्रीववधोद्यताः ॥१७॥
अप्रमेयबला वीरा विक्रान्ताः कामरूपिणः । ते गजाचलसंकाशा वपुष्मन्तो महाबलाः ॥१८॥
ऋक्षवानरगोपुच्छाः क्षिप्रमेवाभिजज्ञिरे । यस्य देवस्य यद्रूपं वेषो यश्च पराक्रमः ॥१९॥
अजायत समस्तेन तस्य तस्य पृथक् पृथक् । गोलाङ्गूलेषु चोत्पन्नाः किंचिदुन्नतविक्रमाः ॥२०॥
ऋक्षीषु च तथा जाता वानराः किंनरीषु च । देवा महर्षिगन्धर्वास्तार्क्ष्ययक्षा यशस्विनः ॥२१॥

नागाः किम्पुरुषाश्चैव सिद्धविद्याधरोरगाः । बहवो जनयामासुर्हृष्टास्तत्र सहस्रशः ॥२२॥
चारणाश्च सुतान् वीरान् ससृजुर्वनचारिणः । वानरान् सुमहाकायान् सर्वान् वै वनचारिणः ॥२३॥
अप्सरस्सु च मुख्यासु तथा विद्याधरीषु च ।
नागकन्यासु च तदा गन्धर्वीणां तनूषु च ।

They were begotten in many thousands and were (ever) ready to make short work of Rāvaṇa. (17) They were valiant and full of prowess and possessed infinite strength. Mighty as they were, they could take any form at will, were endowed with gigantic bodies and looked like elephants and mountains. (18) The bears, monkeys and long-tailed monkeys (*lit.*, those with a tail resembling that of a cow) saw the light in no time (after conception, as is the case with heavenly beings). The son of each god was individually born as on all fours with the complexion, bodily structure and prowess that the latter possessed; while those born among the long-tailed monkeys were endowed with a slightly superior prowess (as compared even with their respective fathers). (19-20) (Even) so monkeys were born of she-bears and Kinnara women. Many renowned gods, great Ṛṣis and Gandharvas, Garuḍa and others (sons of Kaśyapa) and Yakṣas, the elephants guarding the quarters and Kiṃpuruṣas (a class of beings allied to the Kinnaras, who are regarded as the attendants of Kubera), Siddhas, Vidyādharas and Nāgas, full of delight, begot sons in thousands on that occasion. (21-22) Through the principal Apsarās and Vidyādhara women as well as through maidens of the Nāgas and the wombs of Gandharva women the Chāraṇas too begot in the form of sons monkeys endowed with a gigantic body and roaming about in the forests and all living only on wild fruits etc.

कामरूपबलोपेता यथाकामविचारिणः ॥२४॥
सिंहशार्दूलसदृशा दर्पेण च बलेन च । शिलाप्रहरणाः सर्वे सर्वे पर्वतयोधिनः ॥२५॥
नखदंष्ट्रायुधाः सर्वे सर्वे सर्वास्त्रकोविदाः । विचालयेयुः शैलेन्द्रान् भेदयेयुः स्थिरान् द्रुमान् ॥२६॥
क्षोभयेयुश्च वेगेन समुद्रं सरितां पतिम् । दारयेयुः क्षितिं पद्भ्यामाप्लवेयुर्महार्णवान् ॥२७॥
नभस्तलं विशेयुश्च गृह्णीयुरपि तोयदान् । गृह्णीयुरपि मातङ्गान् मत्तान् प्रव्रजतो वने ॥२८॥
नर्दमानांश्च नादेन पातयेयुर्विहंगमान् । ईदृशानां प्रसूतानि हरीणां कामरूपिणाम् ॥२९॥
शतं शतसहस्राणि यूथपानां महात्मनाम् । ते प्रधानेषु यूथेषु हरीणां हरियूथपाः ॥३०॥
बभूवुर्यूथपश्रेष्ठान् वीरांश्चाजनयन् हरीन् । अन्ये ऋक्षवतः प्रस्थानुपतस्थुः सहस्रशः ॥३१॥
अन्ये नानाविधाञ्छैलान् काननानि च भेजिरे ।

They were gifted with the power of assuming any form and acquiring any amount of strength at will and could go about wherever they liked. (23-24) Nay, they resembled the lion and tiger in point of haughtiness and strength. All used (even) rocks as their missiles and all fought with mountains (as their weapon). (25) All had claws and teeth for their weapons and all were skilled in the use of all (sorts of) missiles. They could shake great mountains and cleave rooted trees. (26) They could agitate the sea, the lord of the rivers, with their impetuosity, rend the earth with their feet and leap across extensive oceans. (27) They could penetrate into the firmament and catch hold of the clouds. They could even seize elephants in rut roaming at will in the forest. (28) Nay, they could dash down with their yell crying birds. A crore of such high-souled monkeys capable of assuming any form at will and able to lead herds of their kind came to light. They turned out to be the leaders of (separate) herds of monkeys among their principal troops and begot (other) valiant monkeys who proved to be the foremost of generals. Others in their thousands resorted to the peaks of Mount Ṛkṣavān; (still) others sought various mountains and forests.

सूर्यपुत्रं च सुग्रीवं शक्रपुत्रं च वालिनम् ॥३२॥
भ्रातरावुपतस्थुस्ते सर्वे च हरियूथपाः । नलं नीलं हनूमन्तमन्यांश्च हरियूथपान् ॥३३॥
ते तार्क्ष्यबलसम्पन्नाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः । विचरन्तोऽर्दयन् सर्वान् सिंहव्याघ्रमहोरगान् ॥३४॥
महाबलो महाबाहुर्वाली विपुलविक्रमः । जुगोप भुजवीर्येण ऋक्षगोपुच्छवानरान् ॥३५॥
तैरियं पृथिवी शूरैः सपर्वतवनार्णवा । कीर्णा विविधसंस्थानैर्नानाव्यञ्जनलक्षणैः ॥३६॥
तैर्मेघवृन्दाचलकूटसंनिभैर्महाबलैर्वानरयूथपाधिपैः ।
बभूव भूर्भीमशरीररूपैः समावृता रामसहायहेतोः ॥३७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे सप्तदशः सर्गः ॥ १७ ॥

All those monkey chiefs flocked round the two brothers, Sugrīva, son of the sun-god, and Vālī, son of Indra, too; while others stood by the side of Nala, Nīla, Hanumān and other monkey chiefs. (29—33) Endowed with the might of Garuḍa, they were all skilled in warfare and, while roaming about, killed all lions, tigers and big snakes (that confronted them). (34) The mighty and stout-armed Vālī, who possessed extraordinary prowess, protected with the might of his arms the (aforesaid) bears, monkeys and long-tailed monkeys. (35) This globe with (all its) mountains, forests and oceans was overrun by the abovementioned heroes of diverse bodily structures and distinguished by various characteristic marks. (36) The earth was filled with those mighty leaders of monkey chiefs, who looked like a mass of clouds or like mountain-peaks and were endowed with a fearful body and aspect and had been born (only) to assist Śrī Rāma. (37)

Thus ends Canto Seventeen in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टादशः सर्गः

Canto XVIII

Advent of Śrī Rāma, Bharata and others; festivities in heaven as well as in Ayodhya; their investiture with the sacred thread; the arrival of Viśwāmitra

निर्वृत्ते तु क्रतौ तस्मिन् हयमेधे महात्मनः । प्रतिगृह्यामरा भागान् प्रतिजग्मुर्यथागतम् ॥ १ ॥
समाप्तदीक्षानियमः पत्नीगणसमन्वितः । प्रविवेश पुरीं राजा सभृत्यबलवाहनः ॥ २ ॥
यथार्हं पूजितास्तेन राज्ञा च पृथिवीश्वराः । मुदिताः प्रययुर्देशान् प्रणम्य मुनिपुंगवम् ॥ ३ ॥
श्रीमतां गच्छतां तेषां स्वगृहाणि पुरात् ततः । बलानि राज्ञां शुभ्राणि प्रहृष्टानि चकाशिरे ॥ ४ ॥
गतेषु पृथिवीशेषु राजा दशरथः पुनः । प्रविवेश पुरीं श्रीमान् पुरस्कृत्य द्विजोत्तमान् ॥ ५ ॥
शान्तया प्रययौ सार्धमृष्यशृङ्गः सुपूजितः । अनुगम्यमानो राज्ञा च सानुयात्रेण धीमता ॥ ६ ॥
एवं विसृज्य तान् सर्वान् राजा सम्पूर्णमानसः । उवास सुखितस्तत्र पुत्रोत्पत्तिं विचिन्तयन् ॥ ७ ॥

The celebrated Aśwamedha sacrifice, as well as that intended to procure male progeny, performed by the high-souled emperor, having been concluded, the immortals (who personally attended it) returned (even) as they had come, after receiving their (respective) shares (of the offerings made in the sacrifices). (1) Having completed the sacred vow (of chastity etc.) taken at the time of consecration, the king proceeded towards his capital accompanied by his wives and along with his servants, army and conveyances. (2) Having been honoured according to their (respective) rank by the emperor, who had (just) concluded his sacrificial performances, the kings too (that had assembled for the sacrifice) returned full of delight to their territories bowing low to Vasiṣṭha, Ṛṣyaśṛnga, Vāmadeva and others (the foremost of sages). (3) Clad in a white uniform (presented by the emperor) and greatly delighted, the troops of those glorious kings, (even) as the latter proceeded to their (respective) homes from that city (of Ayodhya), shone brightly. (4) The kings having dispersed, the glorious King Daśaratha (who had gone out in state to see them off) entered the city once more, placing the foremost of Brahmans (Vasiṣṭha and others) at his head. (5) Duly honoured and being followed (to some distance) by the wise king with his *entourage*, Ṛṣyaśṛnga (too) departed with (his wife) Śāntā. (6) Having thus sent away all of them, and fully realized his ambition (of performing a horse-sacrifice), the king dwelt happily there (in his own capital), (eagerly) awaiting the birth of sons (to him). (7)

ततो यज्ञे समाप्ते तु ऋतूनां षट् समत्ययुः । ततश्च द्वादशे मासे चैत्रे नावमिके तिथौ ॥ ८ ॥
नक्षत्रेऽदितिदैवत्ये स्वोच्चसंस्थेषु पञ्चसु । ग्रहेषु कर्कटे लग्ने वाक्पताविन्दुना सह ॥ ९ ॥
प्रोद्यमाने जगन्नाथं सर्वलोकनमस्कृतम् । कौसल्याजनयद् रामं दिव्यलक्षणसंयुतम् ॥१०॥
विष्णोरर्धं महाभागं पुत्रमैक्ष्वाकनन्दनम् । लोहिताक्षं महाबाहुं रक्तोष्ठं दुन्दुभिस्वनम् ॥११॥
कौसल्या शुशुभे तेन पुत्रेणामिततेजसा । यथा वरेण देवानामदितिर्वज्रपाणिना ॥१२॥

In the meantime six seasons (each consisting of two months) rolled away after the sacrifice was over. Then on the ninth lunar day (of the bright fortnight) of Chaitra, the twelfth month after the conclusion of the sacrifices) when the asterism Punarvasu (presided over by Aditi) was in the ascendant and (as many as) five planets (*vis*, the Sun, Mars, Saturn, Jupiter and Venus) happened to be exalted (appeared in the zodiacal signs of Meṣa or Aries, Makara or Capricornus, Tulā or Libra, Karka or Cancer and Mīna or Pisces respectively) and Jupiter in conjunction with the Moon appeared in the zodiacal sign of Karka, mother Kausalyā (the eldest wife of Daśaratha) gave birth to a highly blessed son named Śrī Rāma, who was (no other than) the Lord of the universe, the adored of all the (three) worlds, the delight of Ikṣwāku's race, who represented one-half of Lord Viṣṇu and was endowed with auspicious divine marks in that he had eyes tinged with red, possessed exceptionally long arms and ruddy lips and a voice resembling the sound of a kettle-drum. (8—11) Kausalyā shone brightly with that son possessed of immense glory (even) as Aditi (the mother of gods) with Indra (the wielder of a thunderbolt), the foremost of gods. (12)

भरतो नाम कैकेय्यां जज्ञे सत्यपराक्रमः । साक्षाद् विष्णोश्चतुर्भागः सर्वैः समुदितो गुणैः ॥१३॥
अथ लक्ष्मणशत्रुघ्नौ सुमित्राजनयत् सुतौ । वीरौ सर्वास्त्रकुशलौ विष्णोरर्धसमन्वितौ ॥१४॥

पुष्ये जातस्तु भरतो मीनलग्ने प्रसन्नधीः । सार्पे जातौ तु सौमित्री कुलीरेऽभ्युदिते रवौ ॥१५॥
राज्ञः पुत्रा महात्मानश्चत्वारो जज्ञिरे पृथक् । गुणवन्तोऽनुरूपाश्च रुच्या प्रोष्ठपदोपमाः ॥१६॥

(Next) through (the womb of) Kaikeyī (the youngest wife of King Daśaratha) was born Bharata, possessed of true valour, who actually represented a quarter of Lord Viṣṇu and was adorned with all (divine) virtues. (13) Sumitrā (the second wife of King Daśaratha) then gave birth to two (twin) sons, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna, both valiant and skilled in the use of all (kinds of) missiles and (jointly) representing a portion (one-sixth) of Lord Viṣṇu. (14) Bharata of cheerful mind was born when the constellation Puṣya was in the ascendant and the Sun had entered the zodiacal sign of Pisces; while the twin sons of Sumitrā were born when the constellation Āśleṣā was in the ascendant and the sun had reached the meridian, touching the zodiacal sign of Karka (Cancer). (15) The four high-souled sons of the emperor were born separately (though identical in essence). Endowed with (transcendental) virtues, they (all) resembled one another and vied with the four stars comprising the constellations Pūrvā Bhādrapadā and Uttarā Bhādrapadā in splendour. (16)

जगुः कलं च गन्धर्वा ननृतुश्चाप्सरोगणाः । देवदुन्दुभयो नेदुः पुष्पवृष्टिश्च खात् पतत् ॥१७॥
उत्सवश्च महानासीदयोध्यायां जनाकुलः । रथ्याश्च जनसम्बाधा नटनर्तकसंकुलाः ॥१८॥
गायनैश्च विराविण्यो वादनैश्च तथापरैः । विरेजुर्विपुलास्तत्र सर्वरत्नसमन्विताः ॥१९॥
प्रदेयांश्च ददौ राजा सूतमागधवन्दिनाम् । ब्राह्मणेभ्यो ददौ वित्तं गोधनानि सहस्रशः ॥२०॥
अतीत्यैकादशाहं तु नामकर्म तथाकरोत् । ज्येष्ठं रामं महात्मानं भरतं कैकयीसुतम् ॥२१॥
सौमित्रिं लक्ष्मणमिति शत्रुघ्नमपरं तथा । वसिष्ठः परमप्रीतो नामानि कुरुते तदा ॥२२॥

The Gandharvas sang melodiously and bevies of Apsarās (celestial nymphs) danced; nay, the kettle-drums of the gods sounded (of their own accord) and a shower of flowers dropped from the heavens. (17) There was great rejoicing marked with crowds of men in Ayodhya. Nay, the streets got crowded with actors and dancers and were marked with a great rush of men. (18) The extensive roads in Ayodhya, which were noisy with the sound of songsters and those who played on musical instruments as well as with that of others (such as the chanters of the Vedas, minstrels, bards and panegyrists) and were strewn with all (kinds of) precious stones (thrown by the people in order to signify their admiration for their songs etc.), presented a gala appearance. (19) The king bestowed presents worth giving on the ballad-singers, bards and panegyrists and gave away riches and cows in thousands to Brahmans. (20) He further performed the naming ceremony (with respect to his sons) on completing eleven* days (after the birth of Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna or thirteen days after the advent of Śrī Rāma, which took place two days earlier). Supremely delighted the sage

---

* The Śruti says :—

क्षत्रियस्य द्वादशाहं सूतकम्

"The impurity of a Kṣatriya, occasioned by childbirth, lasts for twelve days.". And a Smṛti text says :—त्रयोदशे राज्ञां नामकरणम्. (The naming ceremony of Kṣatriya boys takes place on the thirteenth day.)

Vasiṣṭha (on behalf of the king) made the eldest, (an embodiment of) the Supreme Spirit, known by the name of 'Rāma', the son of Kaikeyī by that of 'Bharata', the (first) son of Sumitrā by that of Lakṣmaṇa and the other by that of Śatrughna on that occasion. (21–22)

ब्राह्मणान् भोजयामास पौरजानपदानपि । अददद् ब्राह्मणानां च रत्नौघममलं बहु ॥२३॥
तेषां जन्मक्रियादीनि सर्वकर्माण्यकारयत् । तेषां केतुरिव ज्येष्ठो रामो रतिकरः पितुः ॥२४॥
बभूव भूयो भूतानां स्वयम्भूरिव सम्मतः । सर्वे वेदविदः शूराः सर्वे लोकहिते रताः ॥२५॥
सर्वे ज्ञानोपसम्पन्नाः सर्वे समुदिता गुणैः । तेषामपि महातेजा रामः सत्यपराक्रमः ॥२६॥
इष्टः सर्वस्य लोकस्य शशाङ्क इव निर्मलः । गजस्कन्धेऽश्वपृष्ठे च रथचर्यासु सम्मतः ॥२७॥
धनुर्वेदे च निरतः पितुः शुश्रूषणे रतः ।

The sage (on behalf of the emperor) fed the Brahmans of the capital as well as of the (entire) kingdom (of Kosala) and gave away to the (said) Brahmans a large heap of shining jewels. (23) He (further) caused to be performed (from time to time) with respect to the (four) princes all (purificatory) rites commencing from the Jātakarma (and ending with Upanayana or investiture with the sacred thread). The eldest of them, Śrī Rāma, proclaimed the greatness of his race like a flag and proved to be the delight of his father. (24) Again he was esteemed by (all) created beings as Brahmā (the self-born). All the (four) princes turned out to be masters of the Vedas and (great) heroes, and all were intent upon doing good to the people. (25) All were endowed with wisdom and all were adorned with virtues. Śrī Rāma, however, was exceptionally glorious of them (all) and possessed of true (unfailing) prowess. (26) Like the full moon in a clear sky he was the beloved of all people and was esteemed in the art of riding on elephants and on horseback and in the (various) processes of driving a chariot. (27) He took delight in the science of archery and was devoted to the service of his father.

बाल्यात् प्रभृति सुस्निग्धो लक्ष्मणो लक्ष्मिवर्धनः ॥२८॥
रामस्य लोकरामस्य भ्रातुर्ज्येष्ठस्य नित्यशः । सर्वप्रियकरस्तस्य रामस्यापि शरीरतः ॥२९॥
लक्ष्मणो लक्ष्मिसम्पन्नो बहिःप्राण इवापरः । न च तेन विना निद्रां लभते पुरुषोत्तमः ॥३०॥
मृष्टमन्नमुपानीतमश्नाति नहि तं विना । यदा हि हयमारूढो मृगयां याति राघवः ॥३१॥
अथैनं पृष्ठतोऽभ्येति सधनुः परिपालयन् । भरतस्यापि शत्रुघ्नो लक्ष्मणावरजो हि सः ॥३२॥
प्राणैः प्रियतरो नित्यं तस्य चासीत् तथा प्रियः ।

Lakṣmaṇa, the promoter of fortune (of those who sought his protection), was ever deeply attached from his (very) infancy to his eldest brother, Śrī Rāma, the delight of the world. He gratified the latter in every way. Lakṣmaṇa, who was rich in splendour, was a second life as it were to Śrī Rāma, moving outside his body. Without him Śrī Rāma (the foremost of men) did not have even a wink of sleep, nor did he partake of a dainty dish brought for him without Lakṣmaṇa. Whenever Śrī Rāma (the celebrated scion of Raghu) went out a-hunting, mounted on horseback, Lakṣmaṇa forthwith followed at his heels, armed with a bow (and arrows) and guarding him on all sides. Śatrughna, the younger brother of Lakṣmaṇa, was dearer to Bharata even than the latter's own life and Bharata likewise was ever dear to Śatrughna.

स चतुर्भिर्महाभागैः पुत्रैर्दशरथः प्रियैः ॥३३॥
बभूव परमप्रीतो देवैरिव पितामहः । ते यदा ज्ञानसम्पन्नाः सर्वे समुदिता गुणैः ॥३४॥
ह्रीमन्तः कीर्तिमन्तश्च सर्वज्ञा दीर्घदर्शिनः । तेषामेवंप्रभावाणां सर्वेषां दीप्ततेजसाम् ॥३५॥
पिता दशरथो हृष्टो ब्रह्मा लोकाधिपो यथा । ते चापि मनुजव्याघ्रा वैदिकाध्ययने रताः ॥३६॥
पितृशुश्रूषणरता धनुर्वेदे च निष्ठिताः ।

The said King Daśaratha felt supremely delighted with his four highly blessed and beloved sons as Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation) with the gods (*viz*, Indra, Varuṇa, Yama and Kubera presiding over the four quarters). When they got enriched with wisdom, they were all adorned with virtues. (Nay) they were modest, glorious, all-knowing and far-sighted. King Daśaratha, the father of them all,—who were possessed of such (unique) glory and luminous splendour,—felt rejoiced as Brahmā, the ruler of the universe. Those tigers among men too were attached to their Vedic studies, nay, devoted to the service of their parents, and were well-versed in the science of archery.

अथ राजा दशरथस्तेषां दारक्रियां प्रति ॥३७॥
चिन्तयामास धर्मात्मा सोपाध्यायः सबान्धवः । तस्य चिन्तयमानस्य मन्त्रिमध्ये महात्मनः ॥३८॥
अभ्यागच्छन्महातेजा विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । स राज्ञो दर्शनाकाङ्क्षी द्वाराध्यक्षानुवाच ह ॥३९॥
शीघ्रमाख्यात मां प्राप्तं कौशिकं गाधिनः सुतम् । तच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य राज्ञो वेश्म प्रदुद्रुवुः ॥४०॥
सम्भ्रान्तमनसः सर्वे तेन वाक्येन चोदिताः । ते गत्वा राजभवनं विश्वामित्रमृषिं तदा ॥४१॥
प्राप्तमावेदयामासुर्नृपायैक्ष्वाकवे तदा । तेषां तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा सपुरोधाः समाहितः ॥४२॥
प्रत्युज्जगाम संहृष्टो ब्रह्माणमिव वासवः ।

Now (when their studies neared completion) King Daśaratha, whose mind was given to piety, deliberated with his family priests (the sages Vasiṣṭha and Vāmadeva) and relations (such as King Romapāda) about the princes' marriage. (Even) while that high-souled monarch was deliberating (on the subject) in the midst of his counsellors, the great sage Viśwāmitra, who was possessed of unique glory, arrived (at the palace of King Daśaratha). Seeking an audience with the king, he addressed the gate-keepers as follows :— (28–39) "Speak (to the king) about me, the sage Viśwāmitra (belonging to the line of Kuśa), the son of Gādhi, having arrived (at his door)." Hearing the aforesaid utterance of the sage and spurred on by that command, all (of them) ran fast to the king's apartments with an awe-stricken mind. Reaching the royal apartments at once, they forthwith reported to King Daśaratha (belonging to the line of Ikṣwāku) the news of the sage Viśwāmitra having arrived (at the portals). Overjoyed to hear the aforesaid statement of theirs, the king, full of devotion, went forth to receive him along with his family priest (Vasiṣṭha), (even) as Indra would go to meet Brahmā.

स दृष्ट्वा ज्वलितं दीप्त्या तापसं संशितव्रतम् ॥४३॥
प्रहृष्टवदनो राजा ततोऽर्घ्यमुपहारयत् । स राज्ञः प्रतिगृह्यार्घ्यं शास्त्रदृष्टेन कर्मणा ॥४४॥
कुशलं चाव्ययं चैव पर्यपृच्छन्नराधिपम् । पुरे कोशे जनपदे बान्धवेषु सुहृत्सु च ॥४५॥
कुशलं कौशिको राज्ञः पर्यपृच्छत् सुधार्मिकः । अपि ते संनताः सर्वे सामन्तरिपवो जिताः ॥४६॥
दैवं च मानुषं चैव कर्म ते साध्वनुष्ठितम् ।

वसिष्ठं च समागम्य कुशलं मुनिपुंगवः ॥४७॥
ऋषींश्च तान् यथान्यायं महाभाग उवाच ह । ते सर्वे हृष्टमनसस्तस्य राज्ञो निवेशनम् ॥४८॥
विविशुः पूजितास्तेन निषेदुश्च यथार्हतः । अथ हृष्टमना राजा विश्वामित्रं महामुनिम् ॥४९॥
उवाच परमोदारो हृष्टस्तमभिपूजयन् ।

Seeing the hermit of austere vows and burning with effulgence, the king with a most cheerful countenance thereupon offered (to him) water to wash his hands with. Accepting the water for washing the hands with and other attentions offered by the king with ceremony as enjoined by the scriptures, he duly inquired of the king after his health and prosperity. The exceedingly pious sage Viśwāmitra (also) duly inquired after the welfare of the king's capital, treasury, kingdom, relations and friends. He (then) said, "I hope all your vassals are fully submissive to you and your enemies subdued. (40—46) And are your duties (like pouring oblations into the fire) in relation to gods and human beings (newcomers) duly discharged?" Nay, meeting (embracing) in the proper order of sequence Vasiṣṭha and those (other) seers (Vāmadeva and so on) who were present there, he inquired after their welfare: so the tradition goes. Delighted in mind, they all (then) entered the court of the celebrated king (Daśaratha) and, received with attentions by him, took their seat according to their (respective) rank. Thrilled with joy the highly magnanimous king then spoke with a delighted mind to the great sage Viśwāmitra, glorifying him (as follows):—

यथामृतस्य सम्प्राप्तिर्यथा वर्षमनूदके ॥५०॥
यथा सदृशदारेषु पुत्रजन्माप्रजस्य वै । प्रणष्टस्य यथा लाभो यथा हर्षो महोदयः ॥५१॥
तथैवागमनं मन्ये स्वागतं ते महामुने । कं च ते परमं कामं करोमि किमु हर्षितः ॥५२॥
पात्रभूतोऽसि मे ब्रह्मन् दिष्ट्या प्राप्तोऽसि मानद । अद्य मे सफलं जन्म जीवितं च सुजीवितम् ॥५३॥
यस्माद् विप्रेन्द्रमद्राक्षं सुप्रभाता निशा मम । पूर्वं राजर्षिशब्देन तपसा द्योतितप्रभः ॥५४॥
ब्रह्मर्षित्वमनुप्राप्तः पूज्योऽसि बहुधा मया । तदद्भुतमभूद् विप्र पवित्रं परमं मम ॥५५॥
शुभक्षेत्रगतश्चाहं तव संदर्शनात् प्रभो । ब्रूहि यत् प्रार्थितं तुभ्यं कार्यमागमनं प्रति ॥५६॥
इच्छाम्यनुगृहीतोऽहं त्वदर्थपरिवृद्धये । कार्यस्य न विमर्शं च गन्तुमर्हसि सुव्रत ॥५७॥
कर्ता चाहमशेषेण दैवतं हि भवान् मम ।
मम चायमनुप्राप्तो महानभ्युदयो द्विज । तवागमनजः कृत्स्नो धर्मश्चानुत्तमो द्विज ॥५८॥
इति हृदयसुखं निशम्य वाक्यं श्रुतिसुखमात्मवता विनीतमुक्तम् ।
प्रथितगुणयशा गुणैर्विशिष्टः परमऋषिः परमं जगाम हर्षम् ॥५९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डेऽष्टादशः सर्गः ॥ १८ ॥

"I consider your advent precisely as welcome as securing nectar in one's own hands, as rainfall in a waterless tract, as the actual birth of a son, through a wife becoming oneself, to one without a child, as the recovery of a treasure irretrievably lost, or joy proceeding from a festive occasion, O great sage! I wonder what supreme object of your desire I can delightfully accomplish and how! (47—52) You are deserving of (every) service from me and have called (at my door) through my good luck, O bestower of honour! My birth stands fulfilled and my life is blessed today. (53) My night has culminated in a propitious sunrise in that I have seen the foremost of Brahmans (in you). Formerly distinguished by the appellation 'Rājarṣi' (a royal sage), you have since earned the status of a Brahmarṣi (Brahman sage), your splendour having been brightened by your asceticism. You are (thus) worthy of adoration to me in many ways. Your visit (to me) has been wonderful in that it has proved to be highly purifying for me, O Brahman sage ! (54–55) Nay, by virtue of your (very) sight, O lord, I have visited (all) sacred places. (Pray) tell me what object is sought (to be accomplished) by you through your advent (to my capital). Favoured by you I wish to promote your cause. You need not entertain any doubt about the success of your mission, O sage of noble vows ! (56–57) I shall fully accomplish your object; for (being an honoured guest) you are a (veritable) god to me. This is an occasion for great rejoicing come to me as well as to mine, O Brahman sage, and the highest religious merit proceeding from your visit has fallen to my lot in its entirety, O holy one !" (58) The great sage (Viśwāmitra), whose renown occasioned by his excellences had spread far and wide and who was distinguished by his virtues, experienced supreme delight on hearing the aforesaid prayer, which was not only pleasing to the heart but also to the ears, addressed as it was in polite words by the high-souled monarch. (59)

Thus ends Canto Eighteen in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

◆

एकोनविंशः सर्गः

Canto XIX

King Daśaratha is stunned to hear the request of Viśwāmitra to send Śrī Rāma with him to dispose of the Rākṣasas that interfered with his sacred observances.

तच्छ्रुत्वा राजसिंहस्य वाक्यमद्भुतविस्तरम् । हृष्टरोमा महातेजा विश्वामित्रोऽभ्यभाषत ॥ १ ॥
सदृशं राजशार्दूल तवैव भुवि नान्यतः । महावंशप्रसूतस्य वसिष्ठव्यपदेशिनः ॥ २ ॥
यत् तु मे हृद्गतं वाक्यं तस्य कार्यस्य निश्चयम् । कुरुष्व राजशार्दूल भव सत्यप्रतिश्रवः ॥ ३ ॥
अहं नियममातिष्ठे सिद्ध्यर्थं पुरुषर्षभ । तस्य विघ्नकरौ द्वौ तु राक्षसौ कामरूपिणौ ॥ ४ ॥
व्रते तु बहुशश्चीर्णे समाप्त्यां राक्षसाविमौ । मारीचश्च सुबाहुश्च वीर्यवन्तौ सुशिक्षितौ ॥ ५ ॥
तौ मांसरुधिरौघेण वेदिं तामभ्यवर्षताम् ।

Hearing the aforesaid speech of Daśaratha (a lion among kings), marked with uncommon length, the highly glorious sage Viśwāmitra replied (as follows), his hair standing on end :—(1) "What you have said is worthy of you alone and of none else on earth, O tiger among kings,—you who are descended of a great pedigree and enjoy the (proud) privilege of being instructed by the sage Vasiṣṭha ! (2) Make a resolve, O tiger among kings, to accomplish the purpose which stands foremost in my heart, and which is just going to be expressed in (so many) words, and (thereby) prove true to your promise (made in verse 58 of the foregoing canto). (3) I stand consecrated for a sacrificial performance for the realization of my aim, O jewel among men ! Two ogres capable of taking any form at will interrupt the said performance in conjunction with their associates. (4) Towards its conclusion, when the sacred observance had been gone through in a large measure, however, these two notorious Rākṣasas, Mārīcha and Subāhu, who are not only possessed of (great) prowess but are highly trained (in the methods of warfare), covered the sacrificial altar with a (large) volume of flesh and blood (dropped from the air).

अवधूते तथाभूते तस्मिन् नियमनिश्चये ॥ ६ ॥
कृतश्रमो निरुत्साहस्तस्माद् देशादपाक्रमे । न च मे क्रोधमुत्स्रष्टुं बुद्धिर्भवति पार्थिव ॥ ७ ॥
तथाभूता हि सा चर्या न शापस्तत्र मुच्यते । स्वपुत्रं राजशार्दूल रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ॥ ८ ॥
काकपक्षधरं वीरं ज्येष्ठं मे दातुमर्हसि । शक्तो ह्येष मया गुप्तो दिव्येन स्वेन तेजसा ॥ ९ ॥
राक्षसा ये विकर्तारस्तेषामपि विनाशने । श्रेयश्चास्मै प्रदास्यामि बहुरूपं न संशयः ॥१०॥
त्रयाणामपि लोकानां येन ख्यातिं गमिष्यति । न च तौ राममासाद्य शक्तौ स्थातुं कथंचन ॥११॥

"My vow in connection with that sacred observance, which had well-nigh been completed as aforesaid, having (thus) been interrupted, I came away dispirited from that region, having achieved nothing beyond (fruitless) exertion. And there is no prompting in me to give vent to my wrath (in the form of an execration), O ruler of the earth ! (5—7) For such is (the character of) that observance : no execration can be uttered in the course of it. Be pleased (therefore) to place at my disposal, O tiger among kings, your eldest and heroic son, Śrī Rāma, (who is) possessed of true (unfailing) prowess though (yet) a boy (adorned with side-locks of hair hanging over the temples after the fashion of the day). For, by virtue of his own transcendent glory and guarded by me, he is equal even to the extermination of (all) ogres that act in a hostile manner. Nay, I shall confer on him manifold boons whereby he will attain fame in all the three worlds : there is no doubt about it. And on coming face to face with Śrī Rāma the two ogres cannot stand in any case. (8—11)

न च तौ राघवादन्यो हन्तुमुत्सहते पुमान् । वीर्योत्सिक्तौ हि तौ पापौ कालपाशवशं गतौ ॥१२॥
रामस्य राजशार्दूल न पर्याप्तौ महात्मनः । न च पुत्रगतं स्नेहं कर्तुमर्हसि पार्थिव ॥१३॥
अहं ते प्रतिजानामि हतौ तौ विद्धि राक्षसौ । अहं वेद्मि महात्मानं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ॥१४॥
वसिष्ठोऽपि महातेजा ये चेमे तपसि स्थिताः । यदि ते धर्मलाभं तु यशश्च परमं भुवि ॥१५॥
स्थिरमिच्छसि राजेन्द्र रामं मे दातुमर्हसि । यद्यभ्यनुज्ञां काकुत्स्थ ददते तव मन्त्रिणः ॥१६॥
वसिष्ठप्रमुखाः सर्वे ततो रामं विसर्जय । अभिप्रेतमसंसक्तमात्मजं दातुमर्हसि ॥१७॥
दशरात्रं हि यज्ञस्य रामं राजीवलोचनम् । नात्येति कालो यज्ञस्य यथायं मम राघव ॥१८॥
तथा कुरुष्व भद्रं ते मा च शोके मनः कृथाः ।

Nor can any man other than Rāma (a scion of Raghu) kill them. The two wicked fellows, who are proud of their prowess and have been caught in the noose of Death, are surely no match for the high-sould Rāma. You should not therefore allow your parental affection to prevail, O ruler of the earth ! (12–13) I give you my word (for it) : take you the two ogres as killed. I know the high-souled Rāma as possessed of true (unfailing) prowess. (14) The highly glorious sage Vasiṣṭha and (all) these who stand vowed to asceticism also know him (as such). If at all you seek the acquisition of religious merit as well as the highest renown for you on earth for all time to come, O king of kings, be pleased to make over Rāma to me. If all your counsellors with the sage Vasiṣṭha as their leader give their consent to you, O scion of Kakutstha (Purañjana), then let Rāma go (with me). Be pleased to hand over (to me) your beloved son, the lotus-eyed Rāma, who (being grown up) is no longer deeply attached (to you), for (a period of) ten (days and) nights only in the interests of my sacrifice. Act in such a way as to ensure that the period of my sacrificial performance is not exceeded, O scion of Raghu, and do not plunge your mind in grief. May good betide you !"

इत्येवमुक्त्वा धर्मात्मा धर्मार्थसहितं वचः ॥१९॥
विरराम महातेजा विश्वामित्रो महामतिः । स तन्निशम्य राजेन्द्रो विश्वामित्रवचः शुभम् ॥२०॥
शोकेन महताऽऽविष्टश्चचाल च मुमोह च । लब्धसंज्ञस्तदोत्थाय व्यषीदत भयान्वितः ॥२१॥
इति हृदयमनोविदारणं मुनिवचनं तदतीव शुश्रुवान् ।
नरपतिरभवन्महान् महात्मा व्यथितमनाः प्रचचाल चासनात् ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकोनविंशः सर्गः ॥ १९ ॥

Having uttered these words, full of piety and truth, the highly intelligent sage Viśwāmitra, whose mind is given to righteousness and who is possessed of extraordinary glory, became silent. Obsessed with excessive grief to hear that righteous request of Viśwāmitra, the said emperor trembled and fainted too. Regaining his consciousness later on, he got up and became sad, seized as he was with fear (of losing his eldest son). (15—21) The great king, magnanimous though he was, felt afflicted in mind (even) as he heard the aforesaid request of the sage, which was extremely agonizing to the heart and the mind, and fell down (unconscious) from his seat. (22)

Thus ends Canto Nineteen in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

विंशः सर्गः

Canto XX

Dasaratha declines to part with Śrī Rāma, thereby enraging Viśwāmitra.

तच्छ्रुत्वा राजशार्दूलो विश्वामित्रस्य भाषितम् । मुहूर्तमिव निस्संज्ञः संज्ञावानिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
ऊनषोडशवर्षो मे रामो राजीवलोचनः । न युद्धयोग्यतामस्य पश्यामि सह राक्षसैः ॥ २ ॥
इयमक्षौहिणी सेना यस्याहं पतिरीश्वरः । अनया सहितो गत्वा योद्धाहं तैर्निशाचरैः ॥ ३ ॥
इमे शूराश्च विक्रान्ता भृत्या मेऽस्त्रविशारदाः । योग्या रक्षोगणैर्योद्धुं न रामं नेतुमर्हसि ॥ ४ ॥
अहमेव धनुष्पाणिर्गोप्ता समरमूर्धनि । यावत् प्राणान्धरिष्यामि तावद्योत्स्ये निशाचरैः ॥ ५ ॥
निर्विघ्ना व्रतचर्या सा भविष्यति सुरक्षिता । अहं तत्र गमिष्यामि न रामं नेतुमर्हसि ॥ ६ ॥
बालो ह्यकृतविद्यश्च न च वेत्ति बलाबलम् । न चास्त्रबलसंयुक्तो न च युद्धविशारदः ॥ ७ ॥
न चासौ रक्षसा योग्यः कूटयुद्धा हि राक्षसाः ।

Hearing the aforesaid request of Viśwāmitra, Daśaratha (a veritable tiger among kings) remained senseless as it were for an hour or so and, regaining his consciousness (afterwards), spoke as follows :—(1) "My lotus-eyed Rāma is less than sixteen years old (yet). I (therefore) do not perceive his capacity to contend with the Rākṣasas. (2) Here is my army, one Akṣauhiṇī* strong, whose maintainer and controller I am. Marching with it I shall (personally) wage war with those ogres. (3) These heroic and valiant retainers of mine are (all) skilled in the use of missiles (and other weapons) and are capable of fighting with hosts of ogres. But you should not take away Rāma. (4) I shall myself guard your sacrifice, bow in hand, and shall contend with the Rākṣasas in the van of a battle so long as I breathe. (5) Fully guarded (by me), the pursuit of the aforesaid observance (by you) will be rid of (all) obstacles; (for) I shall go thither (in person). You should not (therefore) take away Rāma. (6) A child (yet) and untrained (in the science of warfare), he cannot estimate the strength or weakness of the enemy. He is neither equipped with the strength of missiles (and other weapons) nor skilled in warfare. (7) Besides he is no match for the Rākṣasas; for the ogres are given to treacherous fighting.

विप्रयुक्तो हि रामेण मुहूर्तमपि नोत्सहे ॥ ८ ॥
जीवितुं मुनिशार्दूल न रामं नेतुमर्हसि । यदि वा राघवं ब्रह्मन् नेतुमिच्छसि सुव्रत ॥ ९ ॥
चतुरङ्गसमायुक्तं मया सह च तं नय । षष्टिर्वर्षसहस्राणि जातस्य मम कौशिक ॥१०॥
कृच्छ्रेणोत्पादितश्चायं न रामं नेतुमर्हसि । चतुर्णामात्मजानां हि प्रीतिः परमिका मम ॥११॥
ज्येष्ठे धर्मप्रधाने च न रामं नेतुमर्हसि । किंवीर्या राक्षसास्ते च कस्य पुत्राश्च के च ते ॥१२॥
कथंप्रमाणाः के चैतान् रक्षन्ति मुनिपुंगव । कथं च प्रतिकर्तव्यं तेषां रामेण रक्षसाम् ॥१३॥
मामकैर्वा बलैर्ब्रह्मन् मया वा कूटयोधिनाम् । सर्वं मे शंस भगवन् कथं तेषां मया रणे ॥१४॥
स्थातव्यं दुष्टभावानां वीर्योत्सिक्ता हि राक्षसाः । तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा विश्वामित्रोऽभ्यभाषत ॥१५॥

"Disunited from Rāma I cannot really survive even for an hour or so, O tiger among ascetics! You should not (therefore) take away Rāma. If, on the other hand, you are keen to take him (a scion of Raghu), O Brahman of noble vows, take him with me as well as with my army consisting of four parts (*viz*, elephants, chariots, cavalry and infantry). Sixty millennia have elapsed since I was born, O Viśwāmitra (born in the line of King Kuśa) and this boy has been begotten with (such) hardship (at this ripe old age). You ought not (therefore) to take away Rāma. Of (all) the four sons my supreme affection is truly speaking fastened on the eldest, in whom piety is predominant. (Hence) you ought not to take away Rāma. Of what prowess are those Rākṣasas, and whose sons are they? Again, who are they (by name) and of what size? Nay, who protect them and how can resistance be offered to those Rākṣasas, given (as they are) to treacherous fighting, by Rāma or my forces or by myself, O holy Brahman? Tell me everything, O venerable sage! What position should be taken up by me on the battle-field opposite to those ogres of wicked intent? For the Rākṣasas are proud of their prowess." Hearing his above-quoted speech the sage Viśwāmitra replied (as follows):—(8—15)

पौलस्त्यवंशप्रभवो रावणो नाम राक्षसः । स ब्रह्मणा दत्तवरस्त्रैलोक्यं बाधते भृशम् ॥१६॥
महाबलो महावीर्यो राक्षसैर्बहुभिर्वृतः । श्रूयते च महाराज रावणो राक्षसाधिपः ॥१७॥

---

* An Akṣauhiṇī consists of 21,870 elephants, an equal number of chariots, 65,610 horses and 109,350 foot.

साक्षाद् वैश्रवणभ्राता पुत्रो विश्रवसो मुनेः । यदा न खलु यज्ञस्य विघ्नकर्ता महाबलः ॥१८॥
तेन संचोदितौ तौ तु राक्षसौ च महाबलौ । मारीचश्च सुबाहुश्च यज्ञविघ्नं करिष्यतः ॥१९॥

"There is an ogre, Rāvaṇa by name, descended in the line of the sage Pulastya (one of the nine mind-born sons of Brahmā, who are the procreators of the entire creation). Having been granted a boon (of immunity from death at the hands of all others except a human being) by Brahmā and followed by numerous Rākṣasas, and possessed of extraordinary strength and great prowess, he oppresses (all) the three worlds (heaven, earth and the intermediate region) to the utmost degree. Nay, Rāvaṇa, the ruler of Rākṣasas, O great king, is (widely) known to be a son of the sage Viśravā (Pulastya's son) and a real (half-) brother of Kubera (the eldest son of Viśravā). When the mighty ogre does not personally interfere with a (particular) sacrifice (considering it below his dignity to interrupt a small undertaking), those two mighty ogres, Mārīcha and Subāhu, actually cause obstruction in that sacrifice even as directed by him." (16—19)

इत्युक्तो मुनिना तेन राजोवाच मुनिं तदा । नहि शक्तोऽस्मि संग्रामे स्थातुं तस्य दुरात्मनः ॥२०॥
स त्वं प्रसादं धर्मज्ञ कुरुष्व मम पुत्रके । मम चैवाल्पभाग्यस्य दैवतं हि भवान् गुरुः ॥२१॥
देवदानवगन्धर्वा यक्षाः पतगपन्नगाः । न शक्ता रावणं सोढुं किं पुनर्मानवा युधि ॥२२॥
स तु वीर्यवतां वीर्यमादत्ते युधि रावणः । तेन चाहं न शक्तोऽस्मि संयोद्धुं तस्य वा बलैः ॥२३॥
सबलो वा मुनिश्रेष्ठ सहितो वा ममात्मजैः । कथमप्यमरप्रख्यं संग्रामाणामकोविदम् ॥२४॥
बालं मे तनयं ब्रह्मन् नैव दास्यामि पुत्रकम् । अथ कालोपमौ युद्धे सुतौ सुन्दोपसुन्दयोः ॥२५॥
यज्ञविघ्नकरौ तौ ते नैव दास्यामि पुत्रकम् । मारीचश्च सुबाहुश्च वीर्यवन्तौ सुशिक्षितौ ॥२६॥
तयोरन्यतरं योद्धुं यास्यामि ससुहृद्गणः । अन्यथा त्वनुनेष्यामि भवन्तं सहबान्धवः ॥२७॥
इति नरपतिजल्पनाद् द्विजेन्द्रं कुशिकसुतं सुमहान् विवेश मन्युः ।
सुहुत इव मखेऽग्निराज्यसिक्तः समभवदुज्ज्वलितो महर्षिवह्निः ॥२८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे विशः सर्गः ॥ २० ॥

Thus addressed by the aforesaid sage (Viśwāmitra), the king then replied to the hermit (as follows):—"I am not at all able to stand in an encounter with that evil-minded fellow. (20) Celebrated as you are, O knower of what is right, show you your favour to my juvenile son as well as to myself, of poor luck as I am (in not being able to carry out your behest); for you are a (veritable) god as well as worthy of adoration to me. (21) Not even gods, demons and Gandharvas (celestial musicians), Yakṣas, birds and reptiles are able to withstand Rāvaṇa on the battle-field; how then can men do so? (22) The said Rāvaṇa truly speaking takes away the prowess of the valiant on the battle-field. I am therefore not capable of contending with him or with his forces, even though accompanied by my troops or united with my sons, O jewel among sages! I shall not therefore part in any case whatsoever with my juvenile and favourite son (Rāma), who looks like a god and is (altogether) unacquainted with wars, O holy Brahman! If Mārīcha and Subāhu, the two notorious sons of Sunda and Upasunda (respectively),—who are full of prowess and highly trained (as well) and appear as Death on the battle-field,—interfere with your sacrificial performance, I shall under no circumstance hand over my pet son (Rāma) to you. (23—26) I shall (personally) proceed with hosts of my relations to give battle to either of the two. Otherwise with my relations I shall crave your indulgence (for my inability to comply with your behest)." (27) A fierce rage possessed (the mind of) Viśwāmitra (son of Gādhi, a scion of Kuśa), the foremost of Brahmans, as a sequel to the above incoherent talk of Daśaratha (a ruler of men). Like a fire well fed with oblations and sprinkled over with ghee in the course of a sacrifice, the fire of anger (thus kindled) in (the mind of) Viśwāmitra (the eminent seer) grew violent (in no time). (28)

Thus ends Canto Twenty in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXI

The wrath of Viśwāmitra; the intercession of Vasiṣṭha in favour of Viśwāmitra

तच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य स्नेहपर्याकुलाक्षरम् । समन्युः कौशिको वाक्यं प्रत्युवाच महीपतिम् ॥ १ ॥
पूर्वमर्थं प्रतिश्रुत्य प्रतिज्ञां हातुमिच्छसि । राघवाणामयुक्तोऽयं कुलस्यास्य विपर्ययः ॥ २ ॥
यदीदं ते क्षमं राजन् गमिष्यामि यथागतम् । मिथ्याप्रतिज्ञः काकुत्स्थ सुखी भव सुहृद्वृतः ॥ ३ ॥
तस्य रोषपरीतस्य विश्वामित्रस्य धीमतः । चचाल वसुधा कृत्स्ना देवानां च भयं महत् ॥ ४ ॥
त्रस्तरूपं तु विज्ञाय जगद् सर्वं महानृषिः । नृपतिं सुव्रतो धीरो वसिष्ठो वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥ ५ ॥

Hearing the reply, quoted above, of Daśaratha, marked with faltering accents expressive of parental affection, Viśwāmitra (descended in the line of Kuśa), full of rage, made the following answer to the king:—(1) "Having first promised to grant the object solicited by me, you want to go back upon your word! This (breach of promise) is unworthy of the scions of Raghu and will prove to be the ruin of this race. (2) If this is bearable to you, I shall return (even) as I came (without taking Rāma with me). With your promise (thus) falsified, O scion of Kakutstha, remain at ease in the midst of your relations." (3) When Viśwāmitra, who was full of wisdom, was seized with fury, the whole earth shook and a grave fear entered the mind of gods. (4) Perceiving the entire world to be greatly alarmed indeed, the great and wise Ṛṣi Vasiṣṭha of noble vows addressed the following words to the king:—(5)

इक्ष्वाकूणां कुले जातः साक्षाद् धर्म इवापरः । धृतिमान् सुव्रतः श्रीमान् न धर्मं हातुमर्हसि ॥ ६ ॥
त्रिषु लोकेषु विख्यातो धर्मात्मा इति राघवः । स्वधर्मं प्रतिपद्यस्व नाधर्मं वोढुमर्हसि ॥ ७ ॥
प्रतिश्रुत्य करिष्येति उक्तं वाक्यमकुर्वतः । इष्टापूर्तवधो भूयात् तस्माद् रामं विसर्जय ॥ ८ ॥
कृतास्त्रमकृतास्त्रं वा नैनं शक्ष्यन्ति राक्षसाः । गुप्तं कुशिकपुत्रेण ज्वलनेनामृतं यथा ॥ ९ ॥

"Born in the line of the Ikṣwākus, you are the highest virtue personified as it were. Full of firmness and observing excellent vows as you do, Your Majesty ought not to abandon righteousness (in the form of fidelity to your word). (6) A scion of Raghu (as you are), celebrated in (all) the three worlds as one whose mind is given to piety, resort to your innate character (fidelity to truth). You ought not to embrace unrighteousness (in the form of breach of promise). (7) Loss of the merit that has accrued to you from sacrificial performances (culminating in a horse-sacrifice) and works of public utility (like the construction of wells etc.) will ensue if you fail to redeem the promise made (by you), having (once) solemnly declared that you will do a thing. Therefore send Rāma (with him). (8) The ogres will not be able to overpower him, no matter whether he has mastered archery or not, so long as he is protected by Viśwāmitra (son of Gādhi, a scion of Kuśa) as nectar was guarded by (a belt* of) fire. (9)

एष विग्रहवान् धर्म एष वीर्यवतां वरः । एष विद्याधिको लोके तपसश्च परायणम् ॥१०॥
एषोऽस्त्रान् विविधान् वेत्ति त्रैलोक्ये सचराचरे । नैनमन्यः पुमान् वेत्ति न च वेत्स्यन्ति केचन ॥११॥
न देवा नर्षयः केचिन्नासुरा न च राक्षसाः । गन्धर्वयक्षप्रवराः सकिंनरमहोरगाः ॥१२॥
सर्वास्त्राणि कृशाश्वस्य पुत्राः परमधार्मिकाः । कौशिकाय पुरा दत्ता यदा राज्यं प्रशासति ॥१३॥
तेऽपि पुत्राः कृशाश्वस्य प्रजापतिसुतासुताः । नैकरूपा महावीर्या दीप्तिमन्तो जयावहाः ॥१४॥
जया च सुप्रभा चैव दक्षकन्ये सुमध्यमे । ते सूतेऽस्त्राणि शस्त्राणि शतं परमभास्वरम् ॥१५॥
पञ्चाशतं सुताँल्लेभे जया लब्धवरा वरान् । वधायासुरसैन्यानामप्रमेयानरूपिणः ॥१६॥
सुप्रभाजनयच्चापि पुत्रान् पञ्चाशतं पुनः । संहारान् नाम दुर्धर्षान् दुराक्रामान् बलीयसः ॥१७॥

"Viśwāmitra is piety incarnate; he is the foremost of those endowed with prowess. He is superior in learning (to all) and is a great repository of asceticism. (10) He knows (the use of) the different types of missiles. In all the three worlds including the mobile and immobile creation inhabiting them no other man (than myself) knows him nor shall any (other) creatures know him, neither gods nor any Ṛṣis nor the demons nor again the Rākṣasas nor the foremost of the Gandharvas and Yakṣas including the Kinnaras and great Nāgas. (11-12) All the missiles were (formerly) born as the most pious sons of Kṛśāśwa (a lord of created beings) and were gifted (by Lord Śiva) to Viśwāmitra while he ruled over a kingdom. (13) The aforesaid sons of Kṛśāśwa, born (as they were) of the daughters of Dakṣa (another lord of created beings), were possessed of varied forms, endowed with extraordinary prowess and full of splendour, and brought victory (to him who employed them in his service). (14) Jayā and Suprabhā, the two aforesaid daughters of Dakṣa, who were (both) possessed of well-proportioned limbs, gave birth to a hundred most effulgent missiles as well as (other) weapons. (15) (Of these) Jayā, who had secured a boon (to this effect), got fifty excellent sons, possessed of infinite glory and devoid of form, for the destruction of Asuric (diabolic) forces. (16) Suprabhā too brought forth fifty more sons, (who were) exceptionally powerful, hard to overpower, (nay) difficult (even) to assail, and (collectively) known by the name of Saṃhāras (destructive forces). (17)

तानि चास्त्राणि वेत्त्येष यथावत् कुशिकात्मजः । अपूर्वाणां च जनने शक्तो भूयश्च धर्मवित् ॥१८॥
तेनास्य मुनिमुख्यस्य धर्मज्ञस्य महात्मनः । न किंचिदस्त्यविदितं भूतं भव्यं च राघव ॥१९॥
एवंवीर्यो महातेजा विश्वामित्रो महायशाः । न रामगमने राजन् संशयं गन्तुमर्हसि ॥२०॥
तेषां निग्रहणे शक्तः स्वयं च कुशिकात्मजः । तव पुत्रहितार्थाय त्वामुपेत्याभियाचते ॥२१॥

---

* *Vide* Mahābhārata I, xxxii, 22—25.

इति मुनिवचनात् प्रसन्नचित्तो रघुवृषभश्च मुमोद पार्थिवाग्र्यः ।
गमनमभिरुरोच राघवस्य प्रथितयशाः कुशिकात्मजाय बुद्ध्या ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकविंशः सर्गः ॥ २१ ॥

"The son of Gādhi, present before you, who is conversant with the principles of righteousness, not only knows (the use of all) those missiles as one ought to but is also capable of evolving new ones. (18) Hence nothing relating to the past and the future is unknown, O scion of Raghu, to this high-souled jewel among the sages, who knows everything concerning Dharma (virtue). (19) Of such (extraordinary) might is the highly renowned and exceptionally glorious Viśwāmitra. You ought not (therefore) to entertain any doubt about sending Śrī Rāma (with him), O king ! (20) Though capable of punishing the Rākṣasas himself, it is for the sake of doing good to your son (Śrī Rāma) that the sage Viśwāmitra (son of Gādhi) has sought you and solicited him as a loan." (21) Delighted in mind by the aforesaid speech of the sage Vasiṣṭha, King Daśaratha (a jewel among the Raghus), the foremost of kings, whose fame was spread far and wide, felt rejoiced and mentally acquiesced in the act of sending Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) in order to placate Viśwāmitra (son of Gādhi, a scion of Kuśa). (22)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-one in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्वाविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXII

King Daśaratha sends Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with Viśwāmitra and the two princes receive initiation from the latter in the two mystic spells Balā and Atibalā.

तथा वसिष्ठे ब्रुवति राजा दशरथः स्वयम् । प्रहृष्टवदनो राममाजुहाव सलक्ष्मणम् ॥ १ ॥
कृतस्वस्त्ययनं मात्रा पित्रा दशरथेन च । पुरोधसा वसिष्ठेन मङ्गलैरभिमन्त्रितम् ॥ २ ॥
स पुत्रं मूर्ध्न्युपाघ्राय राजा दशरथस्तदा । ददौ कुशिकपुत्राय सुप्रीतेनान्तरात्मना ॥ ३ ॥
ततो वायुः सुखस्पर्शो नीरजस्को ववौ तदा । विश्वामित्रगतं रामं दृष्ट्वा राजीवलोचनम् ॥ ४ ॥
पुष्पवृष्टिर्महत्यासीद् देवदुन्दुभिनिःस्वनैः । शङ्खदुन्दुभिनिर्घोषः प्रयाते तु महात्मनि ॥ ५ ॥

While Vasiṣṭha was speaking as aforesaid, King Daśaratha with an exceptionally cheerful countenance personally called Śrī Rāma along with Lakṣmaṇa (knowing as he did that the two were inseparable). (1) Smelling the head of his son, (as a token of affection), after he had been blessed by his mother (Queen Kausalyā) as well as by his father, King Daśaratha, and consecrated by Vasiṣṭha, the family priest, by means of benedictory Vedic texts, King Daśaratha then committed him to the care of Viśwāmitra (son of Gādhi) with an extremely delighted mind. (2–3) Seeing the lotus-eyed Rāma following Viśwāmitra at that moment, a breeze delightful to the touch and free from dust began to blow at once. (4) Even as the high-souled Rāma was about to depart there was a shower of flowers (from the heavens) and a loud blast of conches and beating of kettle-drums (in the capital), accompanied by the sound of celestial drums. (5)

विश्वामित्रो ययावग्रे ततो रामो महायशाः । काकपक्षधरो धन्वी तं च सौमित्रिरन्वगात् ॥ ६ ॥
कलापिनौ धनुष्पाणी शोभयानौ दिशो दश । विश्वामित्रं महात्मानं त्रिशीर्षाविव पन्नगौ ॥ ७ ॥
अनुजग्मतुरक्षुद्रौ पितामहमिवाश्विनौ । अनुयातौ श्रिया दीप्तौ शोभयन्तावनिन्दितौ ॥ ८ ॥
तदा कुशिकपुत्रं तु धनुष्पाणी स्वलंकृतौ । बद्धगोधाङ्गुलित्राणौ खड्गवन्तौ महाद्युती ॥ ९ ॥
कुमारौ चारुवपुषौ भ्रातरौ रामलक्ष्मणौ । अनुयातौ श्रिया दीप्तौ शोभयेतामनिन्दितौ ॥१०॥
स्थाणुं देवमिवाचिन्त्यं कुमाराविव पावकी ।

Viśwāmitra walked in the van and the highly renowned Rāma, adorned with side-locks and armed with a bow, followed next; while Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) followed the latter. (6) Equipped each with a pair of quivers, bow in hand, and illuminating the ten directions (*viz*, the four quarters, the four corners intervening the quarters, the upper and the lower directions) the two high-souled princes, who were devoted to the sage and were resplendent with glory and were irreproachable (in every way), and looked like a pair of three-headed serpents (the two quivers appearing like two additional heads), followed the noble-minded Viśwāmitra even as the (twin-gods) Aświnīkumāras (the physicians of gods) would accompany Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation)—adding lustre to the sage. (7–8) Following at his heels the two juvenile and irreproachable brothers, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa,—who carried a bow in their hand, were duly adorned (with jewels), (nay) who had gloves of iguana skin fastened about their fingers and were (further) armed with a sword, who were possessed of great splendour and charming limbs and were radiant with glory,—added to the lustre of Viśwāmitra (a scion of Kuśika) as the two boys Skanda and Viśākha (born of the fire-god) would adorn the immortal Lord Śiva, who is beyond (all) conception.

अध्यर्धयोजनं गत्वा सरय्वा दक्षिणे तटे ॥११॥
रामेति मधुरां वाणीं विश्वामित्रोऽभ्यभाषत । गृहाण वत्स सलिलं मा भूत् कालस्य पर्ययः ॥१२॥
मन्त्रग्रामं गृहाण त्वं बलामतिबलां तथा । न श्रमो न ज्वरो वा ते न रूपस्य विपर्ययः ॥१३॥
न च सुप्तं प्रमत्तं वा धर्षयिष्यन्ति नैर्ऋताः । न बाह्वोः सदृशो वीर्ये पृथिव्यामस्ति कश्चन ॥१४॥
त्रिषु लोकेषु वा राम न भवेत् सदृशस्तव । बलामतिबलां चैव पठतस्तात राघव ॥१५॥
न सौभाग्ये न दाक्षिण्ये न ज्ञाने बुद्धिनिश्चये । नोत्तरे प्रतिवक्तव्ये समो लोके तवानघ ॥१६॥
एतद्विद्याद्वये लब्धे न भवेत् सदृशस्तव । बला चातिबला चैव सर्वज्ञानस्य मातरौ ॥१७॥
क्षुत्पिपासे न ते राम भविष्येते नरोत्तम । बलामतिबलां चैव पठतस्तात राघव ॥१८॥
विद्याद्वयमधीयाने यशश्चाथ भवेद् भुवि । पितामहसुते ह्येते विद्ये तेजस्समन्विते ॥१९॥
प्रदातुं तव काकुत्स्थ सदृशस्त्वं हि पार्थिव । कामं बहुगुणाः सर्वे त्वय्येते नात्र संशयः ॥२०॥
तपसा सम्भृते चैते बहुरूपे भविष्यतः ।

Having walked to a distance of about twelve miles along the southern bank of Sarayu, the sage Viśwāmitra addressed the (following) sweet words :—"Rāma, sip (a little) water ; let there be no loss of time. (9—12) Receive you (from me with Lakṣmaṇa instruction in) the chain of Mantras known by the name of Balā and the other known as Atibalā. (By recourse to them) you will have no fatigue nor fever nor will your loveliness be (ever) marred (by old age etc.). (13) Nor will the ogres (born of Nirṛti, the goddess of death and variously regarded as the wife of Adharma or as a daughter of Adharma and Hiṃsā) overpower you even when you are asleep or careless (having omitted, for instance, to rinse your mouth, say, after evacuating your bladder); none on earth will equal you in the prowess of arms. (14) Nay, so long as you (continue to) mutter the (spells known by the names of) Balā and Atibalā, none will prove to be a match for you in all the three worlds, O Rāma ! (15) None in the world will be your equal, O sinless one, either in good fortune or in prowess or in wisdom or in the judgment of your intellect or (again) in counter-arguments. (16) When the two aforementioned spells have been received (learnt) by you, none will compare with you (in any virtue whatsoever); for Balā and Atibalā are the sources of all wisdom (inasmuch as they dispel hunger and thirst etc., which dull one's intellect and thereby make one forget whatever he has learnt). (17) So long as you (continue to) repeat Balā as well as Atibalā hunger and thirst, O Rāma, will never be felt by you, O jewel among men ! (18) So long as you go on muttering the two spells your renown will spread over the (entire) globe ; for these two spells are the daughters of Brahmā (the creator) and are full of efficacy. (19) I feel inclined to impart (the knowledge of) these spells to you, O scion of Kakutstha; for you are fit to receive them, O prince ! Even though all the manifold virtues referred to (in verses 13 to 19) above already exist in you—there is no doubt about it, the two spells mentioned above will grow many times more efficacious when duly grasped by you, (who are) asceticism personified (being the goal of all austerities)."

ततो रामो जलं स्पृष्ट्वा प्रहृष्टवदनः शुचिः ॥२१॥
प्रतिजग्राह ते विद्ये महर्षेर्भावितात्मनः । विद्यासमुदितो रामः शुशुभे भीमविक्रमः ॥२२॥
सहस्ररश्मिर्भगवान् शरदीव दिवाकरः । गुरुकार्याणि सर्वाणि नियुज्य कुशिकात्मजे ।
ऊषुस्तां रजनीं तत्र सरय्वां सुसुखं त्रयः ॥२३॥
दशरथनृपसूनुसत्तमाभ्यां तृणशयनेऽनुचिते तदोषिताभ्याम् ।
कुशिकसुतवचोऽनुलालिताभ्यां सुखमिव सा विबभौ विभावरी च ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे द्वाविंशः सर्गः ॥ २२ ॥

Sipping water, Śrī Rāma, who is all-pure (by nature), received with a most cheerful countenance (initiation in) the aforesaid two spells from that great sage (Viśwāmitra) of purified mind. Equipped with (the knowledge of) the aforesaid spells, Śrī Rāma of terrible prowess shone like the glorious sun, casting innumerable rays, in autumn. Viśwāmitra (son of Gādhi) having taught (to Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) all the duties that one owes to a teacher, all the three spent the night with ease on the bank of the Sarayu there. (20—23) To Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two jewels among the sons of King Daśaratha), who, even though they lay there on a bed of straw, unworthy of princes, were fondled all along by the words of Viśwāmitra (son of Gādhi), that night appeared delightful indeed. (24)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-two in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रयोविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXIII

Night-long sojourn of Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with Viśwāmitra in a holy hermitage at the confluence of the Gangā and the Sarayu

प्रभातायां तु शर्वर्यां विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । अभ्यभाषत काकुत्स्थौ शयानौ पर्णसंस्तरे ॥ १ ॥
कौसल्या सुप्रजा राम पूर्वा संध्या प्रवर्तते । उत्तिष्ठ नरशार्दूल कर्तव्यं दैवमाह्निकम् ॥ २ ॥
तस्यर्षेः परमोदारं वचः श्रुत्वा नरोत्तमौ । स्नात्वा कृतोदकौ वीरौ जेपतुः परमं जपम् ॥ ३ ॥
कृताह्निकौ महावीर्यौ विश्वामित्रं तपोधनम् । अभिवाद्यातिसंहृष्टौ गमनायाभितस्थतुः ॥ ४ ॥

The night having all but culminated in dawn, the great sage Viśwāmitra spoke (as follows) to Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Kakutstha), lying on a bed of dry leaves (mixed with straw):—(1) "Kausalyā is blessed with a worthy son (in you), O Rāma! The morning twilight has set in. (Therefore) get up, O tiger among men! Contemplation on the Deity and the daily routine of duties (making for the purification of the body) have to be gone through." (2) Hearing the exceedingly gentle admonition of the celebrated sage (Viśwāmitra), the two heroes (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), the foremost among men, performed their ablutions and, having offered oblations of water (to the sun-god), muttered the most sacred text (the Gāyatrī*, than which there is no holier text). (3) Having concluded their morning devotions (*viz*, the Sandhyā prayers, Brahma-Yajña or recitation of portions of the Vedas and other sacred texts as an offering to Ṛṣis, forming part of the five major Yajñas, fetching pieces of wood for being offered to the sacred fire, and so on) and saluting Viśwāmitra, rich in asceticism, the two exceptionally valiant princes (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) felt extremely delighted and stood before the latter, ready to proceed (further). (4)

तौ प्रयान्तौ महावीर्यौ दिव्यां त्रिपथगां नदीम् । ददृशाते ततस्तत्र सरय्वाः संगमे शुभे ॥ ५ ॥
तत्राश्रमपदं पुण्यमृषीणां भावितात्मनाम् । बहुवर्षसहस्राणि तप्यतां परमं तपः ॥ ६ ॥
तं दृष्ट्वा परमप्रीतौ राघवौ पुण्यमाश्रमम् । ऊचतुस्तं महात्मानं विश्वामित्रमिदं वचः ॥ ७ ॥
कस्यायमाश्रमः पुण्यः कोऽस्मिन् वसते पुमान् । भगवञ्छ्रोतुमिच्छावः परं कौतूहलं हि नौ ॥ ८ ॥
तयोस्तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा प्रहस्य मुनिपुंगवः । अब्रवीच्छ्रूयतां राम यस्यायं पूर्व आश्रमः ॥ ९ ॥

While moving onward from that spot (where they had broken their journey overnight), the two very mighty princes sighted the divine river Gangā, which (flows through heaven, earth and the subterranean regions and thus) takes a threefold course near its well-known and blessed confluence with the Sarayu. (5) There they (further) beheld the holy site of the hermitages of Ṛṣis of purified mind, that had been practising the highest form of asceticism for (the past) many thousand years. (6) Supremely delighted to behold that sacred abode of hermits, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Raghu) addressed the following prayer to the celebrated Viśwāmitra of noble mind:—(7) "Whose holy hermitage is this? What personage, we ask you, dwells in it? We both desire to hear this; for great is our curiosity (in this behalf),

---

* The scripture tells us :—न गायत्र्याः परं जप्यम्.

O venerable sir!" (8) Hearing the aforesaid submission of the two brothers, Viśwāmitra (the foremost of hermits) heartily laughed and said, "Hear, O Rāma, of him whose former residence this is. (9)

कंदर्पो मूर्तिमानासीत् काम इत्युच्यते बुधैः । तपस्यन्तमिह स्थाणुं नियमेन समाहितम् ॥१०॥
कृतोद्वाहं तु देवेशं गच्छन्तं समरुद्गणम् । धर्षयामास दुर्मेधा हुंकृतश्च महात्मना ॥११॥
अवध्यातश्च रुद्रेण चक्षुषा रघुनन्दन । व्यशीर्यन्त शरीरात् स्वात् सर्वगात्राणि दुर्मतेः ॥१२॥
तत्र गात्रं हतं तस्य निर्दग्धस्य महात्मनः । अशरीरः कृतः कामः क्रोधाद् देवेश्वरेण ह ॥१३॥
अनङ्ग इति विख्यातस्तदाप्रभृति राघव । स चाङ्गविषयः श्रीमान् यत्राङ्गं स मुमोच ह ॥१४॥
तस्यायमाश्रमः पुण्यस्तस्येमे मुनयः पुरा । शिष्या धर्मपरा वीर तेषां पापं न विद्यते ॥१५॥
इहाद्य रजनीं राम वसेम शुभदर्शन । पुण्ययोः सरितोर्मध्ये श्वस्तरिष्यामहे वयम् ॥१६॥
अभिगच्छामहे सर्वे शुचयः पुण्यमाश्रमम् । इह वासः परोऽस्माकं सुखं वत्स्यामहे निशाम् ॥१७॥
स्नाताश्च कृतजप्याश्च हुतहव्या नरोत्तम ।

Kandarpa (the god of love), who is (also) spoken of by the wise as Kāma (Cupid), was endowed with a (living) form (in the past). (On one occasion) the foolish fellow was bold enough to assail (with shafts of love) Lord Śiva, the suzerain Lord of gods,—who had been performing austerities in this (very) hermitage and remained uninterruptedly absorbed in deep meditation,—while He was after having married going out along with the (entire) host of the (forty-nine) wind-gods (in order to meet Goddess Pārvatī), and Love was (thereupon) snubbed with a roar (in the form of the sound 'hum') by the high-souled Lord. (10-11) He was further reproached by Lord Rudra (the god of destruction) with His (third) eye, O scion of Raghu, and (lo !) all the limbs of the evil-minded fellow dropped off from his body. (12) (It was) on that occasion (that) the limbs of the haughty fellow, consumed through the wrath of Lord Śiva (the suzerain Lord of gods) disappeared and it was in this way that Kāma was rendered bodiless. (13) Thenceforward he came to be widely known by the name of Ananga (bodiless), O scion of Raghu, and the tract of land where that glorious being shed his embodied state became known as the Anga territory: so the tradition goes. (14) This holy hermitage belongs to Him and these sages (practising austerities here at present) have been His disciples in the past. As such they are devoted to piety and no sin exists in them, O Rāma ! (15) Let us halt for this night in this hermitage, hemmed in by the two holy streams, O Rāma of handsome looks ; tomorrow we shall cross the Ganga. (16) Let us all enter the holy hermitage when we are purified (by bath etc.). Our sojourn here will be most welcome and we shall happily spend the night here after we have bathed, muttered our prayers and poured oblations into the sacred fire; O jewel among men !"

तेषां संवदतां तत्र तपोदीर्घेण चक्षुषा ॥१८॥
विज्ञाय परमप्रीता मुनयो हर्षमागमन् । अर्घ्यं पाद्यं तथाऽऽतिथ्यं निवेद्य कुशिकात्मजे ॥१९॥
रामलक्ष्मणयोः पश्चादकुर्वन्नतिथिक्रियाम् । सत्कारं समनुप्राप्य कथाभिरभिरञ्जयन् ॥२०॥
यथार्हमजपन् संध्यामृषयस्ते समाहिताः । तत्र वासिभिरानीता मुनिभिः सुव्रतैः सह ॥२१॥
न्यवसन् सुसुखं तत्र कामाश्रमपदे तथा ।
कथाभिरभिरामाभिरभिरामौ नृपात्मजौ । रमयामास धर्मात्मा कौशिको मुनिपुंगवः ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे त्रयोविंशः सर्गः ॥ २३ ॥

While they were talking together (as aforesaid) there (outside the hermitage), the sages (dwelling in the hermitage), felt supremely delighted to discover their presence with their eyes that had attained a long range (clairvoyance) through askesis, and experienced a thrill of joy. Having offered to Viśwāmitra water to wash his hands and feet with and extending their hospitality to him, they subsequently offered hospitality to Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (too). Having received attentions (in return from Viśwāmitra as well as from Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), they regaled them with stories (etc.). (17—20) At dusk (when day and night meet) the aforesaid Ṛṣis (including Viśwāmitra and his pupils, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) muttered the Gāyatrī-Mantra according to their ability* with a calm and collected mind. Taken by the sages of holy vows dwelling in that hermitage with them, Viśwāmitra and his two pupils stayed most comfortably on that site of the hermitage associated with the name of Kāma; while Viśwāmitra (a scion of kuśa), the foremost of ascetics, whose mind is given to piety, entertained the two charming princes with delightful stories. (21-22)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-three in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुर्विंशः सर्गः
Canto XXIV

An account of the Sarayu given by Viśwāmitra; some facts relating to the ogress Tāṭakā revealed and hints given about killing her

ततः प्रभाते विमले कृताह्निकमरिंदमौ । विश्वामित्रं पुरस्कृत्य नद्यास्तीरमुपागतौ ॥ १ ॥
ते च सर्वे महात्मानो मुनयः संशितव्रताः । उपस्थाप्य शुभां नावं विश्वामित्रमथाब्रुवन् ॥ २ ॥
आरोहतु भवान् नांवं राजपुत्रपुरस्कृतः । अरिष्टं गच्छ पन्थानं मा भूत् कालस्य पर्ययः ॥ ३ ॥
विश्वामित्रस्तथेत्युक्त्वा तानृषीन् प्रतिपूज्य च । ततार सहितस्ताभ्यां सरितं सागरंगमाम् ॥ ४ ॥
तत्र शुश्राव वै शब्दं तोयसंरम्भवर्धितम् । मध्यमागम्य तोयस्य तस्य शब्दस्य निश्चयम् ॥ ५ ॥
ज्ञातुकामो महातेजाः सह रामः कनीयसा । अथ रामः सरिन्मध्ये पप्रच्छ मुनिपुंगवम् ॥ ६ ॥
वारिणो भिद्यमानस्य किमयं तुमुलो ध्वनिः । राघवस्य वचः श्रुत्वा कौतूहलसमन्वितम् ॥ ७ ॥
कथयामास धर्मात्मा तस्य शब्दस्य निश्चयम् ।

Placing in the forefront Viśwāmitra, who had (just) finished his daily routine (of morning devotions), the two brothers, who were capable of subduing their enemies, arrived at the bank of the river (Ganga). (1) Getting an excellent boat (to ferry them across), all the high-souled sages of austere vows, mentioned above, forthwith spoke to Viśwāmitra (as follows) :—(2) "Board you the boat followed by the king's sons and (having crossed the river) proceed on your journey at an auspicious moment. Let there be no loss of time." (3) Saying "Amen !" and returning the salutations of those seers (assembled to see them off) with honour, Viśwāmitra, accompanied by the two brothers, began to cross the river

---

* The maximum Japa that one is expected to do after his Sandhyā prayers is one thousand repetitions, the moderate number is one hundred, while ten is the irreducible minimum—सहस्रपरमां देवीं शतमध्यां दशावराम्.

Ganga (hastening to meet the ocean). (4) Reaching the middle of the stream, the highly glorious Rāma along with Lakṣmaṇa (the younger of the two) distinctly heard on the river a noise enhanced by the agitation caused by the striking of waves against one another, and felt eager to know the definite cause of the noise. In mid stream Śrī Rāma presently questioned (in the following words) Viśwāmitra (the foremost of hermits):—(5-6) "What is the cause of this tumultuous noise (ostensibly) proceeding from a volume of water striking against another ?" Hearing the inquiry of Śrī Rāma, marked with curiosity, the sage (whose mind is given to piety) stated (as follows) the definite cause of that noise :—

कैलासपर्वते राम मनसा निर्मितं परम् ॥ ८ ॥
ब्रह्मणा नरशार्दूल तेनेदं मानसं सरः । तस्मात् सुस्राव सरसः सायोध्यामुपगूहते ॥ ९ ॥
सरःप्रवृत्ता सरयूः पुण्या ब्रह्मसरश्च्युता । तस्यायमतुलः शब्दो जाह्नवीमभिवर्तते ॥१०॥
वारिसंक्षोभजो राम प्रणामं नियतः कुरु । ताभ्यां तु तावुभौ कृत्वा प्रणाममतिधार्मिकौ ॥११॥
तीरं दक्षिणमासाद्य जग्मतुर्लघुविक्रमौ । स वनं घोरसंकाशं दृष्ट्वा नरवरात्मजः ॥१२॥
अविप्रहतमैक्ष्वाकः पप्रच्छ मुनिपुंगवम् । अहो वनमिदं दुर्गं झिल्लिकागणसंयुतम् ॥१३॥
भैरवैः श्वापदैः कीर्णं शकुन्तैर्दारुणारवैः । नानाप्रकारैः शकुनैर्वाश्यद्भिर्भैरवस्वनैः ॥१४॥
सिंहव्याघ्रवराहैश्च वारणैश्चापि शोभितम् । धवाश्वकर्णककुभैर्बिल्वतिन्दुकपाटलैः ॥१५॥
संकीर्णं बदरीभिश्च किं न्विदं दारुणं वनम् । तमुवाच महातेजा विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः ॥१६॥
श्रूयतां वत्स काकुत्स्थ यस्यैतद् दारुणं वनम् । एतौ जनपदौ स्फीतौ पूर्वमास्तां नरोत्तम ॥१७॥
मलदाश्च करूषाश्च देवनिर्माणनिर्मितौ । पुरा वृत्रवधे राम मलेन समभिप्लुतम् ॥१८॥
क्षुधा चैव सहस्राक्षं ब्रह्महत्या समाविशत् । तमिन्द्रं मलिनं देवा ऋषयश्च तपोधनाः ॥१९॥
कलशैः स्नापयामासुर्मलं चास्य प्रमोचयन् । इह भूम्यां मलं दत्त्वा देवाः कारूषमेव च ॥२०॥
शरीरजं महेन्द्रस्य ततो हर्षं प्रपेदिरे । निर्मलो निष्करूषश्च शुद्ध इन्द्रो यथाभवत् ॥२१॥
ततो देशस्य सुप्रीतो वरं प्रादादनुत्तमम् । इमौ जनपदौ स्फीतौ ख्यातिं लोके गमिष्यतः ॥२२॥
मलदाश्च करूषाश्च ममाङ्गमलधारिणौ । साधु साध्विति तं देवाः पाकशासनमब्रुवन् ॥२३॥
देशस्य पूजां तां दृष्ट्वा कृतां शक्रेण धीमता । एतौ जनपदौ स्फीतौ दीर्घकालमरिंदम ॥२४॥
मलदाश्च करूषाश्च मुदिता धनधान्यतः ।

"There exists, O Rāma, on Mount Kailāsa a great lake created by Brahmā (the creator) with his mind, hence it is known by the name of Mānasa (born of the mind), O tiger among men ! A river named Sarayu,—so called because it has its source in a lake (सरसो यौति or याति) and hallowed in that it has flowed from a lake created by Brahmā,—emanated from that lake. It encircles Ayodhya (on all sides except the south). This sound, which has no parallel, proceeds from the violent commotion caused by (the onrush of) its waters (even) as it rushes to meet the Jāhnavī (Ganga, so called because it was drunk off by the sage Jahnu, whose sacrificial grounds were inundated by it, and was later released by him through his ears). Offer salutation (to the two rivers where they meet) with a concentrated mind, O Rāma !" Offering salutation to the two streams (united with one another) and reaching the southern bank (of the Ganga), the two brothers, exceptionally pious (as they were), proceeded (on their onward journey) with quick paces (along with Viśwāmitra). Beholding a forest of terrible aspect and unfrequented (by men),

Vaidika Pandit Sri V Hariharan Collection, Shoḷinganallur, Chennai

Śrī Rāma (the son of a king, the foremost of men), a scion of Ikṣwāku, questioned (as follows) Viśwāmitra (a jewel among sages) :—"Oh this forest is difficult of access ! It is swarmed with crickets and infested by fierce beasts of prey and vultures raising harsh notes and various (other) kinds of birds uttering fierce cries. (7—14) What could possibly be this fearful forest graced with lions, tigers and boars, as well as with elephants, and thickly set with Dhavas, Aśwakarṇas, Kakubhas (Arjunas), Bilvas, Tindukas, Pāṭalas and jujubes ?" The great sage Viśwāmitra, possessed as he was of exceptional glory, replied to him (as follows) :—(15-16) "Hear, O darling, of the being to whom this forest belongs, O Rāma ! Here (on this land),' O jewel among men, there existed in the former days two prosperous kingdoms, the Malada and the Karūṣa (by name), brought into existence by the effort of gods. In the ancient times, when the demon Vṛtra was killed in battle (by Indra), the sin of killing a Brahman laid hold of Indra (distinguished by a thousand eyes), who was (accordingly) overcome with impurity and hunger. The gods and the Ṛṣis rich in askesis bathed the aforesaid Indra, impure as he was (through sin), with jars (full of water of the holy Ganga further consecrated by the utterance of sacred texts) and washed off his impurity (thereby). Depositing the impurity as well as the (pangs of) hunger fallen off from the body of the great Indra in this (tract of) land, the gods derived joy thereby. And Indra (for his part) was completely rid of his impurity and hunger. (17—21) Highly pleased (at this) Indra thereupon conferred the following superb boon on the two tracts of land :—"These two stretches of land, that have imbibed my impurity, will grow prosperous and will be known in the world by the names of Malada and Karūṣa." Seeing that honour conferred on those tracts of land by the wise Indra, the gods (for their part) applauded the celebrated Indra (the chastiser of the demon Pāka) in the words "Well done ! good !!" For a considerable (length of) time, O subduer of foes, these two territories, Malada and Karūṣa, thenceforward continued to be prosperous, and rich in wealth and food-grains.

कस्यचित्त्वथ कालस्य यक्षिणी कामरूपिणी ॥२५॥
बलं नागसहस्रस्य धारयन्ती तदा ह्यभूत् । ताटका नाम भद्रं ते भार्या सुन्दस्य धीमतः ॥२६॥
मारीचो राक्षसः पुत्रो यस्याः शक्रपराक्रमः । वृत्तबाहुर्महाशीर्षो विपुलास्यतनुर्महान् ॥२७॥
राक्षसो भैरवाकारो नित्यं त्रासयते प्रजाः । इमौ जनपदौ नित्यं विनाशयति राघव ॥२८॥
मलदांश्च करूषांश्च ताटका दुष्टचारिणी । सेयं पन्थानमावृत्य वसत्यध्यर्धयोजने ॥२९॥
अत एव च गन्तव्यं ताटकाया वनं यतः । स्वबाहुबलमाश्रित्य जहीमां दुष्टचारिणीम् ॥३०॥
मन्नियोगादिमं देशं कुरु निष्कण्टकं पुनः । नहि कश्चिदिमं देशं शक्तो ह्यागन्तुमीदृशम् ॥३१॥
यक्षिण्या घोरया राम उत्सादितमसह्यया ।
एतत् ते सर्वमाख्यातं यथैतद् दारुणं वनम् । यक्ष्या चोत्सादितं सर्वमद्यापि न निवर्तते ॥३२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे चतुर्विंशः सर्गः ॥ २४ ॥

Now, when some time had elapsed (since the aforesaid incident), there appeared (in this region), so the tradition goes, a Yakṣa woman, Tāṭakā by name, capable of assuming any form at will and possessing at the (very) time of her birth the might of a thousand elephants, who is the wife of the wise Sunda, may good betide you, and whose son, the ogre Mārīcha, possesses the strength of

Indra and is endowed with round arms, a large head, an enormous mouth and a colossal body. The mighty Rākṣasa, who has a terrible form, is a perennial source of terror to the people; while Tāṭakā, who conducts herself like a wicked woman, constantly ravages these two principalities of Malada and Karūṣa, O scion of Raghu! As such she lives in an area of twelve miles obstructing the road. (22—29) For this very reason let us proceed in the quarter where exists the forest of Tāṭakā. Relying on the might of your own arms, make short work of this ogress of wicked conduct. (30) Under my order make this realm thornless as before. None is really speaking able to visit this land, though so holy and beautiful, tormented as it is by the terrible Yakṣa woman, who has grown (so) intolerable. In this way has been told (by me) everything (that you asked, *viz.*) how this forest looks (so) fearful, how the entire region has been laid waste by the Yakṣa woman and how she does not desist from her nefarious activities even to this day. (31–32)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-four in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXV

Questioned by Śrī Rāma, Viśwāmitra tells him more about the birth of Tāṭakā, of her marriage with Sunda, as well as about the birth of Mārīcha as a result of their union, and how the latter was subjected to an execration by the sage Agastya, and finally urges Śrī Rāma to despatch the ogress.

अथ तस्याप्रमेयस्य मुनेर्वचनमुत्तमम् । श्रुत्वा पुरुषशार्दूलः प्रत्युवाच शुभां गिरम् ॥ १ ॥
अल्पवीर्या यदा यक्षी श्रूयते मुनिपुंगव । कथं नागसहस्रस्य धारयत्यबला बलम् ॥ २ ॥
इत्युक्तं वचनं श्रुत्वा राघवस्यामितौजसः । हर्षयञ्श्लक्ष्णया वाचा सलक्ष्मणमरिंदमम् ॥ ३ ॥
विश्वामित्रोऽब्रवीद् वाक्यं शृणु येन बलोत्कटा । वरदानकृतं वीर्यं धारयत्यबला बलम् ॥ ४ ॥

Hearing the noble utterance of the celebrated Viśwāmitra, possessed of immeasurable glory, Śrī Rāma (a tiger among men) forthwith asked the following sweetly-worded question:—(1) "When Tāṭakā (the Yakṣa woman) is known (from what you say) to be a female (proverbially lacking in strength), O jewel among hermits, she must (presumably) be of poor might. How (then) does she wield the strength of a thousand elephants?" (2) Hearing the aforesaid question of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), possessed of infinite strength, Viśwāmitra addressed the (following) reply to the former, who was capable of chastising the enemy, gladdening him along with Lakṣmaṇa by his bland speech:—"Hear the reason why she is richly endowed with strength. Though a frail woman (by birth), she wields (extraordinary) strength conferred by a boon (granted in her favour). (3–4)

पूर्वमासीन्महायक्षः सुकेतुर्नाम वीर्यवान् । अनपत्यः शुभाचारः स च तेपे महत्तपः ॥ ५ ॥
पितामहस्तु सुप्रीतस्तस्य यक्षपतेस्तदा । कन्यारत्नं ददौ राम ताटकां नाम नामतः ॥ ६ ॥
ददौ नागसहस्रस्य बलं चास्याः पितामहः । न त्वेव पुत्रं यक्षाय ददौ चासौ महायशाः ॥ ७ ॥
तां तु बालां विवर्धन्तीं रूपयौवनशालिनीम् । जम्भपुत्राय सुन्दाय ददौ भार्यां यशस्विनीम् ॥ ८ ॥
कस्यचित् त्वथ कालस्य यक्षी पुत्रं व्यजायत । मारीचं नाम दुर्धर्षं यः शापाद् राक्षसोऽभवत् ॥ ९ ॥

Formerly there was a great and powerful Yakṣa, Suketu by name, who was issueless, though of virtuous conduct. He therefore practised great austerities (with intent to please Brahmā). Highly gratified even in the course of his austerities, Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation, which sprang from his mind-born sons) gave him an excellent daughter, Tāṭakā by name: so the tradition goes. (5–6) Brahmā further vouchsafed to her the strength of a thousand elephants. The illustrious Brahmā, however, did not deliberately grant a son to the Yakṣa (obviously thinking that a son of the kind desired by him would prove a great scourge to the world). (7) Suketu for his part gave away as wife that glorious girl, rich in comeliness of form and (exuberance of) youth, (even) while she was growing apace to womanhood, to Sunda, son of Jambha, (who, being a demon, was qualified to marry a Yakṣa girl, both being demigods). (8) Now after some time Tāṭakā (the Yaksa girl) actually gave birth to a son, Mārīcha by name, who was hard to overcome and who turned to be an ogre (living on raw flesh) under a curse. (9)

सुन्दे तु निहते राम अगस्त्यमृषिसत्तमम् । ताटका सह पुत्रेण प्रधर्षयितुमिच्छति ॥१०॥
भक्षार्थं जातसंरम्भा गर्जन्ती साभ्यधावत । आपतन्तीं तु तां दृष्ट्वा अगस्त्यो भगवानृषिः ॥११॥
राक्षसत्वं भजस्वेति मारीचं व्याजहार सः । अगस्त्यः परमामर्षस्ताटकामपि शप्तवान् ॥१२॥
पुरुषादी महायक्षी विकृता विकृतानना । इदं रूपं विहायाशु दारुणं रूपमस्तु ते ॥१३॥
सैषा शापकृतामर्षा ताटका क्रोधमूर्च्छिता । देशमुत्सादयत्येनमगस्त्याचरितं शुभम् ॥१४॥
एनां राघव दुर्वृत्तां यक्षीं परमदारुणाम् । गोब्राह्मणहितार्थाय जहि दुष्टपराक्रमाम् ॥१५॥
नह्येनां शापसंसृष्टां कश्चिदुत्सहते पुमान् । निहन्तुं त्रिषु लोकेषु त्वामृते रघुनन्दन ॥१६॥
नहि ते स्त्रीवधकृते घृणा कार्या नरोत्तम । चातुर्वर्ण्यहितार्थं हि कर्तव्यं राजसूनुना ॥१७॥
नृशंसमनृशंसं वा प्रजारक्षणकारणात् । पातकं वा सदोषं वा कर्तव्यं रक्षता सदा ॥१८॥
राज्यभारनियुक्तानामेष धर्मः सनातनः । अधर्म्यां जहि काकुत्स्थ धर्मो ह्यस्यां न विद्यते ॥१९॥

Sunda having been killed (by the sage Agastya by means of a curse), O Rāma, Tāṭakā along with her son sought to kill Agastya, the foremost of Ṛsis. (10) Her rage having been excited, she (as well as Mārīcha) ran towards the sage in order to devour him. Seeing her rushing (towards him), Agastya, the mighty Ṛṣi, however, said to Mārīcha, "Attain the state of an ogre!" Full of extreme anger the aforesaid Agastya cursed Tāṭakā too in the following words):—(11–12) "Dropping this comely form at once, get transformed into an ugly man-eating ogress with a mis-shapen countenance, a great Yaksa woman as you are! Let your personality assume a cruel aspect." (13) Her indignation having been aroused by the execration, the aforesaid Tātakā, thus transformed and bewildered with anger, ravages this holy tract (once) trodden by Agastya. (14) For the good of the cows and the Brahmans, O Rāma, get rid of this most cruel Yaksa woman of evil conduct and perverted valour. (15) No man in (all) the three worlds other than you dare kill this woman, made formidable by a curse, O scion of Raghu ! (16) No disgust should be felt by you for the act of killing a woman, O jewel among men ! For in the interest of the four grades of society (even) a cruel deed has in any case to be perpetrated by a Kṣatriya prince as well as an act which is anything but cruel. For the protection of the people even that which is sinful or wrong must invariably be done by one whose duty it is to protect. (17–18) Such is the eternal duty of those charged with the onus of administration. Make short work of the impious woman, O scion of Kakutstha ; for there exists no righteousness in her. (19)

श्रूयते हि पुरा शक्रो विरोचनसुतां नृप । पृथिवीं हन्तुमिच्छन्तीं मन्थरामभ्यसूदयत् ॥२०॥
विष्णुना च पुरा राम भृगुपत्नी पतिव्रता । अनिन्द्रं लोकमिच्छन्ती काव्यमाता निषूदिता ॥२१॥
एतैश्चान्यैश्च बहुभी राजपुत्रैर्महात्मभिः ।
अधर्मसहिता नार्यो हताः पुरुषसत्तमैः । तस्मादेनां घृणां त्यक्त्वा जहि मच्छासनान्नृप ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे पञ्चविंशः सर्गः ॥ २५ ॥

"It is heard that in the former days Indra killed Mantharā, daughter of Virochana (son of Prahlāda), who desired to destroy the earth, O protector of men ! (20) Again, the wife of the sage Bhṛgu and the mother of Śukrāchārya (the well-known preceptor of the demons), who, though devoted to her husband, desired to see the world bereft of Indra, was disposed of by Lord Viṣṇu* in the past, O Rāma ! (21) Women characterized by impiety were killed by (all) these as well as by many other high-souled Kṣatriya princes, who were the foremost of men. Therefore, shaking off (all) tenderness, despatch her by my command, O protector of men !" (22)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-five in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

◆

षड्विंशः सर्गः

Canto XXVI

Śrī Rāma kills Tāṭakā.

मुनेर्वचनमक्लीबं श्रुत्वा नरवरात्मजः । राघवः प्राञ्जलिर्भूत्वा प्रत्युवाच दृढव्रतः ॥ १ ॥
पितुर्वचननिर्देशात् पितुर्वचनगौरवात् । वचनं कौशिकस्येति कर्तव्यमविशङ्कया ॥ २ ॥
अनुशिष्टोऽस्म्ययोध्यायां गुरुमध्ये महात्मना । पित्रा दशरथेनाहं नावज्ञेयं हि तद्वचः ॥ ३ ॥
सोऽहं पितुर्वचः श्रुत्वा शासनाद् ब्रह्मवादिनः । करिष्यामि न संदेहस्ताटकावधमुत्तमम् ॥ ४ ॥
गोब्राह्मणहितार्थाय देशस्य च हिताय च । तव चैवाप्रमेयस्य वचनं कर्तुमुद्यतः ॥ ५ ॥

---

* We read in the Matsya-Purāṇa (Discourse XLVII) how during the absence of her son, Śukra, who had gone out to practise austerities, the demons, hard pressed by the heavenly army, sought the wife of Bhṛgu for protection and how the latter, who accordingly tried to destroy the gods including Lord Viṣṇu, was subsequently killed by Lord Viṣṇu at the request of Indra.

Hearing the utterance of the sage (Viśwāmitra), which was anything but cowardly, Prince Rāma (a scion of Raghu), firm of resolve as he was, replied (as follows) with joined palms :— (1) "In the midst of (other) elders at Ayodhya I was instructed by my high-souled father, King Daśaratha, in the following words :—'In pursuance of the instructions of your father conveyed in his (actual) words and out of respect for your father's word the command of Viśwāmitra (a scion of Kuśa) must be carried out (by you) without (any) scruple !' His admonition (therefore) should on no account be ignored (by me). (2-3) Having heard the (aforesaid) exhortation of my father and in obedience to the command of an exponent of the Vedas (in you) I shall accordingly discharge my foremost duty in the form of killing (the ogress) Tāṭakā : there is no doubt about it. (4) For the purpose of doing good to the cows and the Brahmans and in the interest of this region as well as in your (own) interest (in the shape of your gratification) I am prepared to do your bidding, possessed as you are of immeasurable glory." (5)

एवमुक्त्वा धनुर्मध्ये बद्ध्वा मुष्टिमरिंदमः । ज्याघोषमकरोत् तीव्रं दिशः शब्देन नादयन् ॥ ६ ॥
तेन शब्देन वित्रस्तास्ताटकावनवासिनः । ताटका च सुसंक्रुद्धा तेन शब्देन मोहिता ॥ ७ ॥
तं शब्दमभिनिध्याय राक्षसी क्रोधमूर्च्छिता । श्रुत्वा चाभ्यद्रवत् क्रुद्धा यत्र शब्दो विनिस्सृतः ॥ ८ ॥
तां दृष्ट्वा राघवः क्रुद्धां विकृतां विकृताननाम् । प्रमाणेनातिवृद्धां च लक्ष्मणं सोऽभ्यभाषत ॥ ९ ॥
पश्य लक्ष्मण यक्षिण्या भैरवं दारुणं वपुः । भिद्येरन् दर्शनादस्या भीरूणां हृदयानि च ॥१०॥
एतां पश्य दुराधर्षां मायाबलसमन्विताम् । विनिवृत्तां करोम्यद्य हृतकर्णाग्रनासिकाम् ॥११॥
नह्येनामुत्सहे हन्तुं स्त्रीस्वभावेन रक्षिताम् । वीर्यं चास्या गतिं चैव हन्यामिति हि मे मतिः ॥१२॥

Saying so and clenching his (left) fist around the middle of his bow, Śrī Rāma (who was capable of taming his enemy) produced a sharp twang, making the quarters resound with the noise. (6) The dwellers in the forest haunted by Tāṭakā (*viz*, the followers of Tāṭakā) were terrified by that sound; while Tāṭakā, (who was) stunned (in the first instance) by that sound, got terribly enraged. (7) The ogress was overwhelmed with wrath on hearing that sound and, having heard it, rushed angrily in the direction whence the sound had emanated. (8) Seeing her enraged and deformed with a misshapen countenance and monstrous in size, the celebrated Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) addressed Lakṣmaṇa (as follows) :—(9) "Behold, O Lakṣmaṇa, the formidable and fearful body of the Yakṣa woman; the hearts of the timorous will break at her (very) sight. (10) See how I put her to flight today once she has been deprived of her ears and the tip of her nose, even though she is difficult to subdue and equipped with the power of Māyā (deceit). (11) I do not really feel inclined to kill her, protected (as she is) by her womanhood. Let me put an end to her prowess (capacity to worst others) as well as to her power of motion (by depriving her of her hands and feet and thereby rendering her incapable of further devastation) : such indeed is my resolve." (12)

एवं ब्रुवाणे रामे तु ताटका क्रोधमूर्च्छिता । उद्यम्य बाहुं गर्जन्ती राममेवाभ्यधावत ॥१३॥
विश्वामित्रस्तु ब्रह्मर्षिर्हुंकारेणाभिभर्त्स्य ताम् । स्वस्ति राघवयोरस्तु जयं चैवाभ्यभाषत ॥१४॥
उद्धुन्वाना रजो घोरं ताटका राघवावुभौ । रजोमेघेन महता मुहूर्तं सा व्यमोहयत् ॥१५॥
ततो मायां समास्थाय शिलावर्षेण राघवौ । अवाकिरत् सुमहता ततश्चुक्रोध राघवः ॥१६॥

शिलावर्षं महत् तस्याः शरवर्षेण राघवः । प्रतिवार्योपधावन्त्याः करौ चिच्छेद पत्रिभिः ॥१७॥
ततश्छिन्नभुजां श्रान्तामभ्याशे परिगर्जतीम् । सौमित्रिरकरोत् क्रोधाद्धृतकर्णाग्रनासिकाम् ॥१८॥
कामरूपधरा सा तु कृत्वा रूपाण्यनेकशः । अन्तर्धानं गता यक्षी मोहयन्ती स्वमायया ॥१९॥
अश्मवर्षं विमुञ्चन्ती भैरवं विचचार सा ।

Even while Śrī Rāma was speaking thus (to Lakṣmaṇa), Tāṭakā, overwhelmed with anger, rushed towards Rāma himself, lifting up her arms and roaring. (13) Threatening her with the sound of 'hum', the Brahman sage Viśwāmitra, however, exclaimed saying- "Good luck to the two scions of Raghu !" and further raised a shout of "Victory !" (14) Raising plentiful dust, the said Tāṭakā perplexed both the scions of Raghu with a huge cloud of dust for an hour or so. (15) Then, falling back upon conjuring tricks, she covered the two scions of Raghu with a tremendous shower of rocks. Thereupon Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) flew into a rage. (16) Parrying the copious shower of rocks sent down by her with a (counter-) shower of shafts, Śrī Rāma cut off her arms with arrows (even) as she came running towards him. (17) Then out of anger Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitra, the second wife of Daśaratha) deprived her of her ears and the tip of her nose while she was roaring close by exhausted with her arms severed. (18) Assuming numerous forms, the said Yakṣa woman, however, capable as she was of taking any form at will, went out of sight, mystifying the two brothers by her conjuring tricks. (19) Pouring a terrible shower of rocks she freely moved about (hither and thither).

ततस्तावश्मवर्षेण कीर्यमाणौ समन्ततः ॥२०॥
दृष्ट्वा गाधिसुतः श्रीमानिदं वचनमब्रवीत् । अलं ते घृणया राम पापैषा दुष्टचारिणी ॥२१॥
यज्ञविघ्नकरी यक्षी पुरा वर्धेत मायया । वध्यतां तावदेवैषा पुरा संध्या प्रवर्तते ॥२२॥
रक्षांसि संध्याकाले तु दुर्धर्षाणि भवन्ति हि । इत्युक्तः स तु तां यक्षीमश्मवृष्ट्याभिवर्षिणीम् ॥२३॥
दर्शयञ्शब्दवेधित्वं तां रुरोध स सायकैः । सा रुद्धा बाणजालेन मायाबलसमन्विता ॥२४॥
अभिदुद्राव काकुत्स्थं लक्ष्मणं च विनेदुषी । तामापतन्तीं वेगेन विक्रान्तामशनीमिव ॥२५॥
शरेणोरसि विव्याध सा पपात ममार च । तां हतां भीमसंकाशां दृष्ट्वा सुरपतिस्तदा ॥२६॥
साधु साध्विति काकुत्स्थं सुराश्चाप्यभिपूजयन् ।

Seeing them being covered by a shower of stones on all sides, the glorious Viśwāmitra (son of Gādhi) tendered the following advice to them :— "Have done with your tenderness, O Rāma ! This sinful Yakṣa woman of wicked conduct, interfering as she does with sacrificial performances, should be got rid of even before she gains strength through her conjuring tricks. The twilight is (fast) approaching there. (20—22) For in the evening, really speaking, the ogres are hard to overcome." Showing his skill in hitting a target (not visible to the eye) with the help of the sound coming from it, the celebrated Śrī Rāma, thus addressed (by Viśwāmitra), impeded that notorious Yakṣa woman, who was covering them with a shower of stones, with (his own) arrows. Intercepted with a network of arrows the ogress, equipped as she was with the power of conjuring tricks, ran roaring towards Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) and Lakṣmaṇa. Śrī Rāma hit her in the breast with a shaft as she came rushing like a thunderbolt discharged with force (by Indra), with the result that she fell down and expired. Seeing her, (so) terrible of aspect, dead, Indra (the ruler of gods) as well as the (other) gods applauded Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), saying "Well done ! Bravo !!"

उवाच परमप्रीतः सहस्राक्षः पुरंदरः ॥२७॥

सुराश्च सर्वे संहृष्टा विश्वामित्रमथाब्रुवन् । मुने कौशिक भद्रं ते सेन्द्राः सर्वे मरुद्गणाः ॥२८॥
तोषिताः कर्मणानेन स्नेहं दर्शय राघवे । प्रजापतेः कृशाश्वस्य पुत्रान् सत्यपराक्रमान् ॥२९॥
तपोबलभृतो ब्रह्मन् राघवाय निवेदय । पात्रभूतश्च ते ब्रह्मंस्तवानुगमने रतः ॥३०॥
कर्तव्यं सुमहत् कर्म सुराणां राजसूनुना । एवमुक्त्वा सुराः सर्वे जग्मुर्हृष्टा विहायसम् ॥३१॥
विश्वामित्रं पूजयन्तस्ततः संध्या प्रवर्तते । ततो मुनिवरः प्रीतस्ताटकावधतोषितः ॥३२॥
मूर्ध्नि राममुपाघ्राय इदं वचनमब्रवीत् । इहाद्य रजनीं राम वसाम शुभदर्शन ॥३३॥
श्वः प्रभाते गमिष्यामस्तदाश्रमपदं मम । विश्वामित्रवचः श्रुत्वा हृष्टो दशरथात्मजः ॥३४॥
उवास रजनीं तत्र ताटकाया वने सुखम् ।
मुक्तशापं वनं तच्च तस्मिन्नेव तदाहनि । रमणीयं विबभ्राज यथा चैत्ररथं वनम् ॥३५॥
निहत्य तां यक्षसुतां स रामः प्रशस्यमानः सुरसिद्धसंघैः ।
उवास तस्मिन् मुनिना सहैव प्रभातवेलां प्रतिबोध्यमानः ॥३६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे षड्विंशः सर्गः ॥ २६ ॥

Highly pleased, the thousand-eyed Indra (the demolisher of strongholds) as well as all the gods, extremely delighted, presently said to Viśwāmitra (as follows) :—"May good betide you, O Viśwāmitra (a scion of Kuśa)! All the hosts of gods including Indra (their ruler) stand gratified with this feat. (Please) show your affection towards Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). Impart to Śrī Rāma (the knowledge of) the missiles presided over by the sons of Kṛś 'swa—a lord of created beings—possessed of unfailing prowess and wielding (great) might acquired through austerities. He is worthy of receiving your favour and is devoted to your service, O holy Brahman ! (23—30) A very great object of gods is going to be accomplished by the prince (Śrī Rāma)." Saying so all the gods disappeared into the heavens, extolling Viśwāmitra, and then the twilight set in. Lovingly smelling the crown of the head of Śrī Rāma, Viśwāmitra (the foremost of hermits), who felt consoled by the death of Tāṭakā, then addressed the following words (to Śrī Rāma):—"Let us spend this night here, O good-looking Rāma ! Next morning at sunrise we shall proceed to the site of my well-known hermitage." Pleased to hear the words of Viśwāmitra, Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha) happily spent the night in that forest, (which had so long been) the haunt of Tāṭakā. Nay, the aforesaid forest, instantly rid of molestation that very day, shone brightly like the delightful grove of Chaitraratha (belonging to Kubera and existing in his capital, Alakā). (31—35) Having disposed of the aforesaid Tāṭakā (the daughter of a Yakṣa) and being applauded by hosts of gods and Siddhas, the celebrated Śrī Rāma halted (for the night) in the forest in the company of the sage, being awakened (by the latter) towards sunrise. (36)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-six in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXVII

Gratified with the death of Tāṭakā, Viśwāmitra imparts to Śrī Rāma the knowledge of the various missiles.

अथ तां रजनीमुष्य विश्वामित्रो महायशाः । प्रहस्य राघवं वाक्यमुवाच मधुरस्वरम् ॥ १ ॥
परितुष्टोऽस्मि भद्रं ते राजपुत्र महायशः । प्रीत्या परमया युक्तो ददाम्यस्त्राणि सर्वशः ॥ २ ॥
देवासुरगणान् वापि सगन्धर्वोरगान् भुवि । यैरमित्रान् प्रसह्याजौ वशीकृत्य जयिष्यसि ॥ ३ ॥
तानि दिव्यानि भद्रं ते ददाम्यस्त्राणि सर्वशः । दण्डचक्रं महद् दिव्यं तव दास्यामि राघव ॥ ४ ॥
धर्मचक्रं ततो वीर कालचक्रं तथैव च । विष्णुचक्रं तथात्युग्रमैन्द्रं चक्रं तथैव च ॥ ५ ॥
वज्रमस्त्रं नरश्रेष्ठ शैवं शूलवतं तथा । अस्त्रं ब्रह्मशिरश्चैव ऐषीकमपि राघव ॥ ६ ॥

Having rested during that night (in the forest haunted so long by Tāṭakā), the highly illustrious Viśwāmitra heartily laughed and addressed the following words in a sweet tone to Śrī Rāma:—(1) "I am highly pleased (with you), O highly glorious prince! May prosperity attend you! Full of supreme affection I (hereby) impart (to you) the knowledge of all the missiles, whereby you will forcibly bring under control and conquer in battle all your enemies on earth and even hosts of gods and demons including the Gandharvas and Nāgas. (2-3) I deliver to you all those celestial missiles, may good betide you! I shall deliver to you, O scion of Raghu, the great and ethereal Daṇḍa-Chakra and then the Dharma-Chakra, O gallant prince, as well as the Kāla-Chakra, also the Viṣṇu-Chakra as well as the most formidable Indra-Chakra and the missile in the shape of a thunderbolt, O jewel among men, similarly the missile named Śūlavata, presided over by Lord Śiva, as well as the missile called Brahmaśirā and even the Aiṣīka (that employed through the medium of a reed, rush or stem of grass), O scion of Raghu! (4—6)

ददामि ते महाबाहो ब्राह्ममस्त्रमनुत्तमम् । गदे द्वे चैव काकुत्स्थ मोदकी शिखरी शुभे ॥ ७ ॥
प्रदीप्ते नरशार्दूल प्रयच्छामि नृपात्मज । धर्मपाशमहं राम कालपाशं तथैव च ॥ ८ ॥
वारुणं पाशमस्त्रं च ददाम्यहमनुत्तमम् । अशनी द्वे प्रयच्छामि शुष्कार्द्रे रघुनन्दन ॥ ९ ॥
ददामि चास्त्रं पैनाकमस्त्रं नारायणं तथा । आग्नेयमस्त्रं दयितं शिखरं नाम नामतः ॥१०॥
वायव्यं प्रथमं नाम ददामि तव चानघ । अस्त्रं हयशिरो नाम क्रौञ्चमस्त्रं तथैव च ॥११॥
शक्तिद्वयं च काकुत्स्थ ददामि तव राघव । कङ्कालं मुसलं घोरं कापालमथ किङ्किणीम् ॥१२॥
वधार्थं रक्षसां यानि ददाम्येतानि सर्वशः । वैद्याधरं महास्त्रं च नन्दनं नाम नामतः ॥१३॥
असिरत्नं महाबाहो ददामि नृवरात्मज ।

"I am going to deliver to you, O mighty-armed prince, the missile presided over by Brahmā, which is excelled by no other missile, and hand over (to you), O tiger among men, a pair of blessed maces, Modakī and Śikharī (by name), shining brightly, O scion of Kakutstha! I (also) deliver (to you), O Rāma, the noose possessed by Dharma (the god of piety) as well as that wielded by Kāla (the Time-Spirit) and the superb missile in the form of the noose employed by Varuṇa (the god presiding over the waters). I (further) deliver (to you), O scion of Raghu, a pair of Aśanis, one dry and the other moist. (7—9) I (also) deliver (to you) the missile presided over by Lord Śiva (the Wielder of the bow named Pināka) and the missile presided over by Lord Nārāyaṇa as well as the well-known missile Śikhara by name, presided over by and beloved of Agni (the god of fire). (10) I further deliver to you, O sinless one, the missile *per excellence* presided over by the wind-god, the missile named Hayaśiras (presided over by Lord Hayagrīva, who bears the head of a horse). as well as the missile called Krauñcha. (11) I hand over to you, O Rāma, a scion of Kakutstha, a pair of Śaktis (javelins—the one presided over by Lord Viṣṇu and the other by Lord Śiva) as also Kankāla, the dreadful Musala, the Kāpāla and Kinkiṇī (missiles wielded by the demons). I deliver (to you) all these missiles, which are capable of destroying the ogres. I hand over to you, O mighty-armed son of Daśaratha (a jewel among men), a great missile used by the Vidyādharas, *viz*, the well-known excellent sword, Nandana by name.

गान्धर्वमस्त्रं दयितं मोहनं नाम नामतः ॥१४॥

प्रस्वापनं प्रशमनं दद्मि सौम्यं च राघव । वर्षणं शोषणं चैव संतापनविलापने ॥१५॥
मादनं चैव दुर्धर्षं कंदर्पदयितं तथा । गान्धर्वमस्त्रं दयितं मानवं नाम नामतः ॥१६॥
पैशाचमस्त्रं दयितं मोहनं नाम नामतः । प्रतीच्छ नरशार्दूल राजपुत्र महायशः ॥१७॥
तामसं नरशार्दूल सौमनं च महाबलम् । संवर्तं चैव दुर्धर्षं मौसलं च नृपात्मज ॥१८॥
सत्यमस्त्रं महाबाहो तथा मायामयं परम् । सौरं तेजःप्रभं नाम परतेजोऽपकर्षणम् ॥१९॥
सोमास्त्रं शिशिरं नाम त्वाष्ट्रमस्त्रं सुदारुणम् । दारुणं च भगस्यापि शीतेषुमथ मानवम् ॥२०॥
एतान् राम महाबाहो कामरूपान् महाबलान् । गृहाण परमोदारान् क्षिप्रमेव नृपात्मज ॥२१॥

"I (further) deliver (to you), O scion of Raghu, the celebrated missile beloved of the Gandharvas, Mohana by name (so called because it is capable of stupefying the enemy), the (soporific) missile Praswāpana, the gentle missile Praśamana (which possesses the virtue of pacifying the anger of the enemy) as well as the missiles Varṣaṇa, Śoṣaṇa, Santāpana and Vilāpana (which possess the virtues of discharging showers, sucking up moisture, releasing excessive heat and making the enemy wail respectively), as well as the formidable missile Mādana (which inebriates the enemy), beloved of Kandarpa (the god of love), and the well-known missile beloved of the Gandharvas, Mānava by name. (12—16) Receive (from me), O illustrious prince, O tiger among men, the well-known missile beloved of the fiends, Mohana by name (so called because it infatuates the enemy), as also the missiles Tāmasa and the mighty Saumana, O tiger among men, as well as Saṃvarta and the formidable Mausala, O son of King Daśaratha, the missile known by the name of Satya as also the great missile called Māyāmaya, O mighty-armed one, the missile presided over by the sun-god, Tejaḥprabha by name, which takes away the glory of the enemy, the missile presided over by the moon-god, Śiśira by name, the most formidable missile presided over by Twaṣṭā (the architect of gods), the dreadful missile of Bhaga (one of the twelve sons of Aditi, presiding over the sun by turns month after month) as well as the missile presided over by Manu, known by the name of Śīteṣu. (17—20) Receive at once, O mighty-armed Rāma, these very powerful and supremely beneficent missiles capable of taking any form at will, O son of King Daśaratha !" (21)

स्थितस्तु प्राङ्मुखो भूत्वा शुचिर्मुनिवरस्तदा । ददौ रामाय सुप्रीतो मन्त्रग्राममनुत्तमम् ॥२२॥
सर्वसंग्रहणं येषां दैवतैरपि दुर्लभम् । तान्यस्त्राणि तदा विप्रो राघवाय न्यवेदयत् ॥२३॥
जपतस्तु मुनेस्तस्य विश्वामित्रस्य धीमतः । उपतस्थुर्महार्हाणि सर्वाण्यस्त्राणि राघवम् ॥२४॥
ऊचुश्च मुदिता रामं सर्वे प्राञ्जलयस्तदा । इमे च परमोदार किंकरास्तव राघव ॥२५॥
यद् यदिच्छसि भद्रं ते तत् सर्वं करवाम वै । ततो रामः प्रसन्नात्मा तैरित्युक्तो महाबलैः ॥२६॥
प्रतिगृह्य च काकुत्स्थः समालभ्य च पाणिना । मानसा मे भविष्यध्वमिति तान्यभ्यचोदयत् ॥२७॥
ततः प्रीतमना रामो विश्वामित्रं महामुनिम् । अभिवाद्य महातेजा गमनायोपचक्रमे ॥२८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे सप्तविंशः सर्गः ॥ २७ ॥

Getting purified (through ablutions etc.) and sitting with his face turned towards the east, Viśwāmitra (the foremost of hermits), who was highly delighted, imparted to Śrī Rāma a string of Mantras (sacred texts capable of invoking the missiles) unexcelled by others (in their field). (22) The Brahman (Viśwāmitra) then delivered to Śrī Rāma (as well as to Lakṣmaṇa) the missiles which could not be easily retained in one's memory in their entirety even by gods. (23) (Even) while that intelligent sage Viśwāmitra was silently repeating the Mantras (embodying the said missiles), all the missiles, worthy of great adoration as they were, appeared before Śrī Rāma (in their shining ethereal forms). (24) Nay, full of joy, all spoke (as follows) with joined palms (as a mark of respect) to Śrī Rāma:—"Here do we stand as your servants, O supremely generous Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu)! We are prepared to do all that you would have us do. May good betide you!" Addressed thus by those mighty missiles (in living form), Śrī Rāma, a scion of Kakutstha, thereupon accepted them with a cheerful mind as his own and, stroking them with his hand, commanded them as follows:—"Appear in my mind (whenever I think of you)." (25—27) Saluting the great sage Viśwāmitra, the highly glorious Śrī Rāma with a delighted mind then got ready to proceed (further). (28)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-seven in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

◆

अष्टाविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXVIII

At the request of Śrī Rāma the sage Viśwāmitra instructs him as well as Lakṣmaṇa in the process of calling back the missiles and delivers some more missiles to them.

प्रतिगृह्य ततोऽस्त्राणि प्रहृष्टवदनः शुचिः । गच्छन्नेव च काकुत्स्थो विश्वामित्रमथाब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
गृहीतास्त्रोऽस्मि भगवन् दुराधर्षः सुरैरपि । अस्त्राणां त्वहमिच्छामि संहारान् मुनिपुंगव ॥ २ ॥
एवं ब्रुवति काकुत्स्थे विश्वामित्रो महातपाः । संहारान् व्याजहाराथ धृतिमान् सुव्रतः शुचिः ॥ ३ ॥
सत्यवन्तं सत्यकीर्तिं धृष्टं रभसमेव च । प्रतिहारतरं नाम पराङ्मुखमवाङ्मुखम् ॥ ४ ॥
लक्ष्यालक्ष्याविमौ चैव दृढनाभसुनाभकौ । दशाक्षशतवक्त्रौ च दशशीर्षशतोदरौ ॥ ५ ॥
पद्मनाभमहानाभौ दुन्दुनाभस्वनाभकौ । ज्योतिषं शकुनं चैव नैरास्यविमलावुभौ ॥ ६ ॥

यौगंधरविनिद्रौ च दैत्यप्रमथनौ तथा ।
शुचिबाहुर्महाबाहुर्निष्कलिर्विरुचस्तथा । सार्चिमाली धृतिमाली वृत्तिमान् रुचिरस्तथा ॥ ७ ॥
पित्र्यः सौमनसश्चैव विधूतमकरावुभौ । परवीरं रतिं चैव धनधान्यौ च राघव ॥ ८ ॥
कानरूपं कामरुचि मोहमावरणं तथा । जृम्भकं सर्पनाथं च पन्थानवरुणौ तथा ॥ ९ ॥
कृशाश्वतनयान् राम भास्वरान् कामरूपिणः । प्रतीच्छ मम भद्रं ते पात्रभूतोऽसि राघव ॥१०॥

When just about to proceed (further) from the forest haunted (so long) by Taṭakī, after receiving the missiles (from Viśwāmitra), the all-pure Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) with a most cheerful countenance now addressed Viśwāmitra (as follows):—(1) "Having received (the knowledge of invoking) missiles (from you), O omnipotent sage, I can no longer be easily overpowered even by gods. I also wish to learn the Mantras capable of calling them back once discharged, O jewel among sages!" (2) (Even) while Śrī Rāma was speaking thus, the great ascetic Viśwāmitra of noble vows, possessed as he was of (extraordinary) firmness and purity, forthwith taught (to him as well as to Lakṣmaṇa) the Mantras capable of calling the missiles back. (3) (He said:—) "Receive from me, O Rāma, a scion of Raghu, since you are a fit recipient, (other) glorious missiles (sons of Kṛśāśwa), capable of assuming any form at will and bearing the names of Satyavān, Satyakīrti, Dhṛṣṭa and Rabhasa, Pratihāratara, Parāñmukha and Avāñmukha, Lakṣya and Alakṣya as well as the yonder Dṛḍhanābha and Sunābha, Daśākṣa and Śatavaktra as well as Daśaśirṣa and Śatodara, Padmanābha and Mahānābha, Dundunābha and Swanābha, Jyoti as well as Śakuna, both Nairāsya and Vimala, Yaugandhara and Vinidra and (even) so Daitya and Pramathana, those going by the names of Śuchibāhu, Mahābahu, Niṣkali and Virucha, Sārchimālī, Dhṛtimālī, Vṛttimān and Ruchira, Pitrya as well as Saumanasa, both Vidhūta and Makara, as also Paravīra and Rati, Dhana and Dhānya, Kāmarūpa, Kāmaruchi, Moha and Āvaraṇa, Jṛmbhaka and Sarpanātha, Panthāna and Varuṇa, O scion of Raghu! May good betide you!" (4—10)

बाढमित्येव काकुत्स्थः प्रहृष्टेनान्तरात्मना । दिव्यभास्वरदेहाश्च मूर्तिमन्तः सुखप्रदाः ॥११॥
केचिदङ्गारसदृशाः केचिद् धूमोपमास्तथा । चन्द्रार्कसदृशाः केचित् प्रह्वाञ्जलिपुटास्तथा ॥१२॥
रामं प्राञ्जलयो भूत्वाब्रुवन् मधुरभाषिणः । इमे स्म नरशार्दूल शाधि किं करवाम ते ॥१३॥
गम्यतामिति तानाह यथेष्टं रघुनन्दनः । मानसाः कार्यकालेषु साहाय्यं मे करिष्यथ ॥१४॥
अथ ते राममामन्त्र्य कृत्वा चापि प्रदक्षिणम् । एवमस्त्विति काकुत्स्थमुक्त्वा जग्मुर्यथागतम् ॥१५॥
स च तान् राघवो ज्ञात्वा विश्वामित्रं महामुनिम् । गच्छन्नेवाथ मधुरं श्लक्ष्णं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१६॥

Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) received them with a most cheerful mind, saying, "Amen!" The missiles in their concrete (living) form were invested with an ethereal and effulgent personality and afforded delight (to all). (11) Some (of them) shone like live coal, others were smoky in appearance, while still others were brilliant as the sun and the moon and were inclined forwards with their palms joined together so as to form a cavity. (12) Standing with their hollowed palms joined together, they addressed Śrī Rāma in sweet accents (as follows):—"Here we are, O tiger among men! (Pray) instruct us what we can do for you." (13) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) replied to them saying, "Let you be gone as you will (for the present). Appearing in my mind (whenever I recall you), you should render assistance to me in times of emergency." (14) Taking leave of Śrī Rāma and also going round him clockwise (as a mark of respect) and addressing the scion of Kakutstha in the words "Be it so!" they withdrew (even) as they had come. (15) Having come to know them Śrī Rāma forthwith addressed the following sweet and delightful words to the great sage Viśwāmitra even while moving (along with him):—(16)

किमेतन्मेघसंकाशं पर्वतस्याविदूरतः । वृक्षखण्डमितो भाति परं कौतूहलं हि मे ॥१७॥
दर्शनीयं मृगाकीर्णं मनोहरमतीव च । नानाप्रकारैः शकुनैर्वल्गुभाषैरलंकृतम् ॥१८॥
निस्सृताः स्मो मुनिश्रेष्ठ कान्ताराद् रोमहर्षणात् । अनया त्ववगच्छामि देशस्य सुखवत्तया ॥१९॥
सर्वं मे शंस भगवन् कस्याश्रमपदं त्विदम् । सम्प्राप्ता यत्र ते पापा ब्रह्मघ्ना दुष्टचारिणः ॥२०॥
तव यज्ञस्य विघ्नाय दुरात्मानो महामुने । भगवंस्तस्य को देशः सा यत्र तव याज्ञिकी ॥२१॥
रक्षितव्या क्रिया ब्रह्मन् मया वध्याश्च राक्षसाः । एतत् सर्वं मुनिश्रेष्ठ श्रोतुमिच्छाम्यहं प्रभो ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डेऽष्टाविंशः सर्गः ॥ २८ ॥

"What is this cluster of trees, that looks from this place like a mass of clouds (in view of its dark colour and density), not very far from the (yonder) mountain? Great indeed is my curiosity (in this behalf). (17) It is (so) pleasing to the sight, extremely soul-ravishing, full of deer and graced with various species of sweetly warbling birds. (18) From the happy look as indicated above of this tract of land, to tell you the truth I presume we have emerged, O jewel among sages, from the forest (haunted so long by the ogress Tāṭakā), which made one's hair stand on end (by its fearful aspect). (19) Whose hermitage does this site really contain? What is the locality of your hermitage, where those sinful, wicked and evil-minded slayers of Brahmans make their inroads for the interruption of your sacrificial performance, O great and glorious sage, (nay) where your sacrificial activity requires to be guarded and the ogres deserve to be killed by me, O holy Brahman! I wish to hear all this, O powerful jewel among sages!" (20—22)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-eight in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

एकोनत्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXIX

Viśwāmitra tells Śrī Rāma the history of Siddhāśrama and arrives at his own hermitage with the two brothers.

अथ तस्याप्रमेयस्य वचनं परिपृच्छतः । विश्वामित्रो महातेजा व्याख्यातुमुपचक्रमे ॥ १ ॥
इह राम महाबाहो विष्णुर्देवनमस्कृतः । वर्षाणि सुबहूनीह तथा युगशतानि च ॥ २ ॥
तपश्चरणयोगार्थमुवास सुमहातपाः । एष पूर्वाश्रमो राम वामनस्य महात्मनः ॥ ३ ॥
सिद्धाश्रम इति ख्यातः सिद्धो ह्यत्र महातपाः । एतस्मिन्नेव काले तु राजा वैरोचनिर्बलिः ॥ ४ ॥
निर्जित्य दैवतगणान् सेन्द्रान् सहमरुद्गणान् । कारयामास तद्राज्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु विश्रुतः ॥ ५ ॥

Hearing the question of Śrī Rāma, who though possessed of infinite glory made inquiries (as above), the highly glorious Viśwāmitra proceeded to make answer as follows:—(1) "Here in this (very) grove, O mighty-armed Rāma, Lord Viṣṇu, the adored of (all) gods, who is noted for His exceptional asceticism, stayed for hundreds of (revolutions of the four) Yugas and many more years for practising austerities and Yoga (concentration of mind). Here stands the former hermitage of Lord Vāmana (the divine Dwarf),—who is no other than the Supreme Spirit,—known by the name of Siddhāśrama; for it was here that Lord Viṣṇu (who is noted for His great asceticism) realized His end (prior to His descent in the form of Vāmana). It was during this very period that King Bali, the son of Virochana (and grandson of Prahlāda), ruled over the kingdom of Indra and became well-known in (all) the three worlds, having thoroughly conquered the hosts of gods including Indra (their ruler) as well as the (forty-nine) wind-gods. (2—5)

यज्ञं चकार सुमहानसुरेन्द्रो महाबलः ।
बलेस्तु यजमानस्य देवाः साग्निपुरोगमाः । समागम्य स्वयं चैव विष्णुमूचुरिहाश्रमे ॥ ६ ॥
बलिर्वैरोचनिर्विष्णो यजते यज्ञमुत्तमम् । असमाप्तव्रते तस्मिन् स्वकार्यमभिपद्यताम् ॥ ७ ॥
ये चैनमभिवर्तन्ते याचितार इतस्ततः । यच्च यत्र यथावच्च सर्वं तेभ्यः प्रयच्छति ॥ ८ ॥
स त्वं सुरहितार्थाय मायायोगमुपाश्रितः । वामनत्वं गतो विष्णो कुरु कल्याणमुत्तमम् ॥ ९ ॥
एतस्मिन्नन्तरे राम कश्यपोऽग्निसमप्रभः । अदित्या सहितो राम दीप्यमान इवौजसा ॥१०॥
देवीसहायो भगवान् दिव्यं वर्षसहस्रकम् । व्रतं समाप्य वरदं तुष्टाव मधुसूदनम् ॥११॥

They very mighty Bali (the ruler of demons), who was exceptionally great, initiated a sacrifice. While Bali was proceeding with the sacrifice, the gods along with Agni (the god of fire), who headed them, personally met Lord Viṣṇu (who had been practising austerities) in this very hermitage and submitted to Him (as follows):— (6) 'Bali, the son of Virochana, O omnipresent Lord, has commenced a great sacrifice. Let the object of Your protégés (gods) be fully accomplished while he has not yet concluded his sacred observance. (7) To those who approach him from here and there with some solicitation he duly gives whatever object they ask and of whatever category. (8) Therefore, assuming the semblance of a dwarf by establishing contact with Māyā (the energy which veils Your true nature and invests You with a seemingly human or mortal character) for the sake of doing good to gods, be pleased to serve our best interest.' (9) In the meantime, O Rāma, the delighter of all, there appeared (on the scene) Sage Kaśyapa, resplendent as fire, accompanied by (his wife) Aditi, as though glowing with his (incarnate) glory. (10) Having concluded his sacred observance extending over a thousand celestial years (equivalent to three hundred and sixty thousand human years), in the company of his wife, the glorious sage eulogized Lord Viṣṇu (the Destroyer of the demon Madhu), (who was) disposed to confer a boon on him (as follows):—(11)

तपोमयं तपोराशिं तपोमूर्तिं तपात्मकम् । तपसा त्वां सुतप्तेन पश्यामि पुरुषोत्तमम् ॥१२॥
शरीरे तव पश्यामि जगत् सर्वमिदं प्रभो । त्वमनादिरनिर्देश्यस्त्वामहं शरणं गतः ॥१३॥
तमुवाच हरिः प्रीतः कश्यपं धूतकल्मषम् । वरं वरय भद्रं ते वरार्होऽसि मतो मम ॥१४॥

तच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य मारीचः कश्यपोऽब्रवीत् । अदित्या देवतानां च मम चैवानुयाचितम् ॥१५॥
वरं वरद सुप्रीतो दातुमर्हसि सुव्रत । पुत्रत्वं गच्छ भगवन्नदित्या मम चानघ ॥१६॥
भ्राता भव यवीयांस्त्वं शक्रस्यासुरसूदन । शोकार्तानां तु देवानां साहाय्यं कर्तुमर्हसि ॥१७॥
अयं सिद्धाश्रमो नाम प्रसादात् ते भविष्यति । सिद्धे कर्मणि देवेश उत्तिष्ठ भगवन्नितः ॥१८॥

'By virtue of my asceticism duly practised I (am able to) behold the Supreme Person in You, endowed (as You are) with abundant asceticism, a repository of asceticism, nay, asceticism incarnate and consisting of asceticism itself. (12) I perceive this entire creation (consisting of animate and inanimate beings) in Your body, O Lord! You are without beginning and indescribable. I have sought You as my refuge.' (13) Full of joy Śrī Hari replied (as follows) to the said Kaśyapa, who had shaken off all impurities:—'Ask of Me a boon of your choice, may good betide you; for you are considered by Me as deserving of favour.' (14) Hearing the aforesaid reply of the Lord, Kaśyapa, the son of Marīchi, submitted, 'Highly satisfied as You are, and disposed to confer a boon, O Lord of noble vows, be pleased to grant the favour solicited by Aditi (my wife) and gods as well as by myself. Assume the role of a son to me as also to Aditi, O sinless Lord! (15-16) Be a younger brother to Indra, O Destroyer of demons! You ought in reality to render help to gods, who are stricken with grief (at the loss of their kingdom. (17) By Your grace (in the form of Your holy presence here) this place will be known by the name of Siddhāśrama. Your undertaking (in the form of austerities) having been successfully concluded, O Ruler of gods, shift yourself (to our abode) from this place, O Lord!' (18)

अथ विष्णुर्महातेजा अदित्यां समजायत । वामनं रूपमास्थाय वैरोचनिमुपागमत् ॥१९॥
त्रीन् पदानथ भिक्षित्वा प्रतिगृह्य च मेदिनीम् । आक्रम्य लोकाँल्लोकार्थी सर्वलोकहिते रतः ॥२०॥
महेन्द्राय पुनः प्रादान्नियम्य बलिमोजसा । त्रैलोक्यं स महातेजाश्चक्रे शक्रवशं पुनः ॥२१॥
तेनैव पूर्वमाक्रान्त आश्रमः श्रमनाशनः । मयापि भक्त्या तस्यैव वामनस्योपभुज्यते ॥२२॥
एनमाश्रममायान्ति राक्षसा विघ्नकारिणः । अत्र ते पुरुषव्याघ्र हन्तव्या दुष्टचारिणः ॥२३॥
अद्य गच्छामहे राम सिद्धाश्रममनुत्तमम् । तदाश्रमपदं तात तवाप्येतद् यथा मम ॥२४॥

"Now the exceptionally glorious Lord Viṣṇu took His descent through Aditi and, assuming the form of the divine Dwarf, sought the presence of Bali (the son of Virochana, Prahlāda's son). (19) Asking (of him) ground which could be covered by three strides and accepting the offer of land (granted by him), the Lord, who sought (to have) all the (three) worlds, devoted as He was to the good of the entire creation, covered (all) the (three) worlds (in three strides, by His all-pervading form) and, taming Bali by His (divine) might, restored them to the great Indra. (In this way) the Lord, who is possessed of exceptional glory, placed all the three worlds once more under the sway of Indra. (20-21) By that very Lord was this hermitage trodden in the (remote) past and is (accordingly) capable of ending the toils of transmigration. It is through devotion to the aforesaid Lord Vāmana alone that this hermitage is being occupied by me too. (22) Ogres interfering with our religious observances make inroads into this hermitage and at this (very) juncture, O tiger among men, the aforesaid Rākṣasas of wicked conduct deserve to be killed by you. (23) Now let us make our way, O Rāma, to the said Siddhāśrama, unsurpassed by others. The site of this hermitage, my darling, is as much yours too as mine (since you are none else than Lord Viṣṇu, to whom it originally belonged)." (24)

इत्युक्त्वा परमप्रीतो गृह्य रामं सलक्ष्मणम् ।
प्रविशन्नाश्रमपदं व्यरोचत महामुनिः । शशीव गतनीहारः पुनर्वसुसमन्वितः ॥२५॥
तं दृष्ट्वा मुनयः सर्वे सिद्धाश्रमनिवासिनः । उत्पत्योत्पत्य सहसा विश्वामित्रमपूजयन् ॥२६॥
यथार्हं चक्रिरे पूजां विश्वामित्राय धीमते । तथैव राजपुत्राभ्यामकुर्वन्नतिथिक्रियाम् ॥२७॥
मुहूर्तमथ विश्रान्तौ राजपुत्रावरिंदमौ । प्राञ्जली मुनिशार्दूलमूचतू रघुनन्दनौ ॥२८॥
अद्यैव दीक्षां प्रविश भद्रं ते मुनिपुंगव । सिद्धाश्रमोऽयं सिद्धः स्यात् सत्यमस्तु वचस्तव ॥२९॥

Having said so and taking Śrī Rāma along with Lakṣmaṇa (by the hand) the great sage (Viśwāmitra) entered the limits of the hermitage, full of great delight. While doing so he shone brightly as the moon free from fog, accompanied by the two stars constituting the constellation Punarvasu. (25) Seeing him (come after a long time, with the two distinguished guests), all the hermits dwelling in the hermitage sprang up in a flurry one after another and paid their homage to Viśwāmitra. (26) They offered worship to the wise Viśwāmitra according to his deserts and likewise offered hospitality to the two princes (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa). (27) Having rested a while, the two princes, the scions of Raghu, who were capable of subduing the enemy, forthwith submitted to Viśwāmitra (a tiger among sages) with joined palms (as follows):—(28) "God blessed you! Go through the ceremony of consecration (for the sacrificial performance) this very day, O jewel among sages! Let this Siddhāśrama prove to be an abode of success (and thereby justify its name) and let your word (that the ogres deserve to be killed by me—*vide* verse 23 above) come true." (29)

एवमुक्तो महातेजा विश्वामित्रो महानृषिः । प्रविवेश तदा दीक्षां नियतो नियतेन्द्रियः ॥३०॥
कुमाराविव तां रात्रिमुषित्वा सुसमाहितौ । प्रभातकाले चोत्थाय पूर्वां संध्यामुपास्य च ॥३१॥
प्रशुची परमं जाप्यं समाप्य नियमेन च । हुताग्निहोत्रमासीनं विश्वामित्रमवन्दताम् ॥३२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकोनत्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ २९ ॥

Addressed in these words (by the two brothers), the highly glorious and eminent Ṛṣi, Viśwāmitra, who had curbed his senses and mind and was observing sacred vows, forthwith went through the ceremony of consecration (for the sacrificial performance going to be undertaken by him). (30) Having reposed during that night with a calm and composed mind and rising at dawn (next morning), the two lads, who resembled Skanda and Viśākha (the two sons of Lord Śiva) and were exceedingly pure (by nature) offered prayer to the morning twilight (after getting purified through bath etc.) and having finished the Japa of the holy Gāyatrī (the foremost of Mantras) according to rules, greeted Viśwāmitra, who was sitting at ease having (mentally)* poured oblations into the sacred fire. (31-32)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-nine in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

---

* It is laid down in the scriptures that having gone through the ceremony of consecration for a sacrificial performance one should no longer pour daily oblations (chiefly consisting of milk, oil and sour gruel) into the sacred fire, nor perform the half-monthly sacrifices performed on the new moon and the full moon and known by the names of Darśa and Pūrṇamāsa respectively—दीक्षामध्ये नाग्निहोत्रं न दर्शपूर्णमासाभ्यां यजेत ।

त्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXX

Śrī Rāma protects the sacrifice of Viśwāmitra against the onslaught of the Rākṣasas and gets rid of them.

अथ तौ देशकालज्ञौ राजपुत्रावरिंदमौ । देशे काले च वाक्यज्ञावब्रूतां कौशिकं वचः ॥ १ ॥
भगवञ्छ्रोतुमिच्छावो यस्मिन् काले निशाचरौ । संरक्षणीयौ तौ ब्रूहि नातिवर्तेत तत्क्षणम् ॥ २ ॥
एवं ब्रुवाणौ काकुत्स्थौ त्वरमाणौ युयुत्सया । सर्वे ते मुनयः प्रीताः प्रशशंसुर्नृपात्मजौ ॥ ३ ॥
अद्यप्रभृति षड्रात्रं रक्षतं राघवौ युवाम् । दीक्षां गतो ह्येष मुनिर्मौनित्वं च गमिष्यति ॥ ४ ॥
तौ तु तद्वचनं श्रुत्वा राजपुत्रौ यशस्विनौ । अनिद्रं षडहोरात्रं तपोवनमरक्षताम् ॥ ५ ॥
उपासांचक्रतुर्वीरौ यत्तौ परमधन्विनौ । ररक्षतुर्मुनिवरं विश्वामित्रमरिंदमौ ॥ ६ ॥

Now the two princes, who knew what is appropriate to a particular time and place and were also aware of the kind of words that should be spoken at a particular time and place and who were capable of subduing the enemy, addressed the following words to Viśwāmitra (a scion of Kuśa):—(1) "O venerable sage, we both should like to hear at what (particular) moment (of time) the two ogres (Mārīcha and Subāhu) have to be guarded against (by us). That moment should not escape (unnoticed)." (2) Full of delight all those hermits (who were present there on that occasion) applauded the two princes, descended in the line of Kakutstha, who spoke as aforesaid, impatient because of their eagerness to fight (with the demons). (3) (They replied on behalf of the Ṛṣi:—) "From this day (onward) keep you vigil for six (days and) nights (continuously), O scions of Raghu ! We tell you this because this sage (Viśwāmitra) has (already) gone through the rite of consecration and will observe (strict) silence (all these days as he is doing even now)." (4) Hearing the aforesaid answer (made by the hermits) the two illustrious princes for their part guarded the grove hallowed by austerities for six days and nights (continuously) without (even a wink of) sleep. (5) Full of vigilance and armed with exquisite bows, the two heroes, capable as they were of subduing the enemy, kept by the side of Viśwāmitra, the foremost of sages, and guarded him (as well as his sacrifice). (6)

अथ काले गते तस्मिन् षष्ठेऽहनि तथाऽऽगते । सौमित्रिमब्रवीद् रामो यत्तो भव समाहितः ॥ ७ ॥
रामस्यैवं ब्रुवाणस्य त्वरितस्य युयुत्सया । प्रजज्वाल ततो वेदिः सोपाध्यायपुरोहिता ॥ ८ ॥
सदर्भचमसस्रुक्का ससमित्कुसुमोच्चया । विश्वामित्रेण सहिता वेदिर्जज्वाल सर्त्विजा ॥ ९ ॥

Now as time rolled on (five days had elapsed) and the sixth day (night), the most important (on which the Soma juice is extracted) arrived, Śrī Rāma said to Lakṣmaṇa, "Be prepared (for a tustle) and vigilant." (7) (Even) as Śrī Rāma, who was impatient because of his eagerness to fight (with the Rākṣasas), spoke as aforesaid, the fire at the sacrificial altar at once blazed forth in the presence of the Brahmā (the superintending priest, *vis*, Viśwāmitra) and the other priests officiating at the sacrifice. (8) The fire at the altar, which was distinguished by the presence of the (sacred) Kuśa grass, a Chamasa (a wooden vessel, generally of a square shape and furnished with a handle, used at sacrifices for drinking the Soma juice), a Sruk (a sort of large wooden ladle used for pouring clarified butter on a sacrificial fire and properly made of Palāśa or Khadira wood and about as long as an arm, with a receptacle at the end of the size of a hand), pieces of firewood and heaps of flowers (for decoration and worship) and was surrounded by Viśwāmitra and the other priests,—blazed forth (all of a sudden, heralding the on slaught of the Rākṣasas). (9)

मन्त्रवच्च यथान्यायं यज्ञोऽसौ सम्प्रवर्तते । आकाशे च महाञ्छब्दः प्रादुरासीद् भयानकः ॥१०॥
आवार्य गगनं मेघो यथा प्रावृषि दृश्यते । तथा मायां विकुर्वाणौ राक्षसावभ्यधावताम् ॥११॥
मारीचश्च सुबाहुश्च तयोरनुचरास्तथा । आगम्य भीमसंकाशा रुधिरौघानवासृजन् ॥१२॥
तां तेन रुधिरौघेण वेदीं वीक्ष्य समुक्षिताम् । सहसाभिद्रुतो रामस्तानपश्यत् ततो दिवि ॥१३॥
तावापतन्तौ सहसा दृष्ट्वा राजीवलोचनः । लक्ष्मणं त्वभिसम्प्रेक्ष्य रामो वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१४॥
पश्य लक्ष्मण दुर्वृत्तान् राक्षसान् पिशिताशनान् । मानवास्त्रसमाधूताननिलेन यथा घनान् ॥१५॥
करिष्यामि न संदेहो नोत्सहे हन्तुमीदृशान् । इत्युक्त्वा वचनं रामश्चापे संधाय वेगवान् ॥१६॥
मानवं परमोदारमस्त्रं परमभास्वरम् । चिक्षेप परमक्रुद्धो मारीचोरसि राघवः ॥१७॥
स तेन परमास्त्रेण मानवेन समाहतः । सम्पूर्णं योजनशतं क्षिप्तः सागरसम्प्लवे ॥१८॥
विचेतनं निघूर्णन्तं शीतेषुबलपीडितम् । निरस्तं दृश्य मारीचं रामो लक्ष्मणमब्रवीत् ॥१९॥
पश्य लक्ष्मण शीतेषुं मानवं मनुसंहितम् । मोहयित्वा नयत्येनं न च प्राणैर्वियुज्यते ॥२०॥
इमानपि वधिष्यामि निर्घृणान् दुष्टचारिणः । राक्षसान् पापकर्मस्थान् यज्ञघ्नान् रुधिराशनान् ॥२१॥
इत्युक्त्वा लक्ष्मणं चाशु लाघवं दर्शयन्निव । विगृह्य सुमहच्चास्त्रमाग्नेयं रघुनन्दनः ॥२२॥
सुबाहूरसि चिक्षेप स विद्धः प्रापतद् भुवि ।
शेषान् वायव्यमादाय निजघान महायशाः । राघवः परमोदारो मुनीनां मुदमावहन् ॥२३॥
स हत्वा राक्षसान् सर्वान् यज्ञघ्नान् रघुनन्दनः । ऋषिभिः पूजितस्तत्र यथेन्द्रो विजये पुरा ॥२४॥

The sacrificial performance in question duly proceeded, accompanied by the recitation of sacred texts and (presently) there arose a loud and fearful clamour in the sky. (10) (Just) as a cloud appears during the monsoon, enveloping the sky, the two Rākṣasas, Mārīcha and Subāhu, swooped down (upon the sacrificial altar) spreading their Māyā (sorcery). They as well as their followers of terrible aspect (presently) arrived and rained torrents of blood as well as of flesh, pus and so on. (11-12). Clearly perceiving the altar in question drenched with that shower of blood, Śrī Rāma ran forth at once (to discover the cause) and presently beheld the ogres in the air. (13) Seeing the two Rākṣasas rushing headlong (towards him) the lotus-eyed Rāma for his part gazed at Lakṣmaṇa and spoke the following words to him:—(14) "Look here, O Lakṣmaṇa, I shall scatter the wicked Rākṣasas, that feed on raw flesh, by means of the Mānavāstra (the missile presided over by Swāyambhuva Manu) as clouds are dispersed by the wind: there is no doubt about it. I do not feel inclined to kill them as they are (destined to survive for some more years)." Having made this observation, Śrī Rāma, a scion of Raghu, who was full of agility, fitted to his bow the most excellent and supremely effulgent missile presided over by Manu, and hurled it most angrily at the breast of Mārīcha. (15—17) Forcibly hit with that highly excellent missile presided over by Manu, the ogre was flung in mid ocean, a distance of full one hundred Yojanas (eight hundred miles) (18) Seeing Mārīcha thrown away reeling and struck senseless by the force of Śīteṣu (the missile presided over by Manu), Śrī Rāma said to Lakṣmaṇa, "Behold, O Lakṣmaṇa, (the power of) Śīteṣu, the missile presided over and tried by Manu! It has removed the demon (to such a long distance) having rendered him senseless; still the fellow has not been deprived of his life (19-20) I shall get rid of the (other) blood-sucking Rākṣasas too, who are merciless and wicked, are given to sinful deeds and interfere with the performance of sacrifices." (21) Having spoken to Lakṣmaṇa as aforesaid and showing his agility as it were, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) quickly invoked the most excellent missile presided over by the god of fire and hurled it at the breast of Subāhu and, pierced by it, the latter fell dead on the ground. Invoking the missile presided over by the wind-god, the highly illustrious and extremely large-hearted Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) threw away the rest (at a distance), bringing joy (thereby) to (all) the sages. (22-23) Having got rid (in this way) of all the Rākṣasas that interfered with the performance of sacrifices, Śrī Rāma was honoured in that (holy) retreat by the Ṛṣis (even) as Indra was felicitated in the past on his victory (scored over demons) (24)

अथ यज्ञे समाप्ते तु विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । निरीतिका दिशो दृष्ट्वा काकुत्स्थमिदमब्रवीत् ॥२५॥
कृतार्थोऽस्मि महाबाहो कृतं गुरुवचस्त्वया ।
सिद्धाश्रममिदं सत्यं कृतं वीर महायशः । स हि रामं प्रशस्यैवं ताभ्यां संध्यामुपागमत् ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे त्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३० ॥

The sacrificial proceedings having been brought to a close, the great sage Viśwāmitra for his part forthwith spoke to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) as follows on seeing the quarters rid of all pests :—(25) "I stand accomplished of my purpose, O mighty-armed and highly illustrious hero, in that the bidding of your preceptor (in me) has been carried out by you. (Nay) the name of this Siddhāśrama (too) has been justified." Having applauded Śrī Rāma as aforesaid, he offered prayers to the evening twilight along with the two brothers. (26)

Thus ends Canto Thirty in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

एकत्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXI

Accompanied by Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and a host of Ṛṣis, Sage Viśwāmitra proceeds northward in the direction of Mithilā to witness the bow-sacrifice of King Janaka and breaks his journey on the bank of the Sone at sunset.

अथ तां रजनीं तत्र कृतार्थौ रामलक्ष्मणौ । ऊषतुर्मुदितौ वीरौ प्रहृष्टेनान्तरात्मना ॥ १ ॥
प्रभातायां तु शर्वर्यां कृतपौर्वाह्णिकक्रियौ । विश्वामित्रमृषींश्चान्यान् सहितावभिजग्मतुः ॥ २ ॥
अभिवाद्य मुनिश्रेष्ठं ज्वलन्तमिव पावकम् । ऊचतुः परमोदारं वाक्यं मधुरभाषिणौ ॥ ३ ॥

इमौ स्म मुनिशार्दूल किंकरौ समुपागतौ । आज्ञापय मुनिश्रेष्ठ शासनं करवाव किम् ॥ ४ ॥
एवमुक्ते तयोर्वाक्ये सर्व एव महर्षयः । विश्वामित्रं पुरस्कृत्य रामं वचनमब्रुवन् ॥ ५ ॥

Delighted on having accomplished their purpose (in the shape of protecting the sacrifice of Viśwāmitra), the two heroes, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, then spent that night with a most cheerful mind in the sacrificial hall (of Viśwāmitra at Siddhāśrama itself). (1) Having finished their morning duties at the close of night, the two brothers for their part sought together Viśwāmitra and the other Ṛṣis. (2) Greeting Viśwāmitra (the foremost of sages), who shone as a blazing fire, the two sweet-tongued brothers made the following highly noble submission :—(3) "Here are we, your servants, present before you, O tiger among hermits ! Tell us, O jewel among sages, what injunction of yours we should carry out." (4) At the aforesaid submission of the two brothers all the great Ṛṣis (present there) made the following reply to Śrī Rāma with the permission of Viśwāmitra :—(5)

मैथिलस्य नरश्रेष्ठ जनकस्य भविष्यति । यज्ञः परमधर्मिष्ठस्तत्र यास्यामहे वयम् ॥ ६ ॥
त्वं चैव नरशार्दूल सहास्माभिर्गमिष्यसि । अद्भुतं च धनूरत्नं तत्र त्वं द्रष्टुमर्हसि ॥ ७ ॥
तद्धि पूर्वं नरश्रेष्ठ दत्तं सदसि दैवतैः । अप्रमेयबलं घोरं मखे परमभास्वरम् ॥ ८ ॥
नास्य देवा न गन्धर्वा नासुरा न च राक्षसाः । कर्तुमारोपणं शक्ता न कथंचन मानुषाः ॥ ९ ॥
धनुषस्तस्य वीर्यं हि जिज्ञासन्तो महीक्षितः । न शेकुरारोपयितुं राजपुत्रा महाबलाः ॥१०॥
तद्धनुर्नरशार्दूल मैथिलस्य महात्मनः । तत्र द्रक्ष्यसि काकुत्स्थ यज्ञं च परमाद्भुतम् ॥११॥
तद्धि यज्ञफलं तेन मैथिलेनोत्तमं धनुः । याचितं नरशार्दूल सुनाभं सर्वदैवतैः ॥१२॥
आयागभूतं नृपतेस्तस्य वेश्मनि राघव । अर्चितं विविधैर्गन्धैर्धूपैश्चागुरुगन्धिभिः ॥१३॥

"A most pious sacrifice is going to be performed, O jewel among men, by Janaka, the king of Mithilā. We shall repair to that place. (6) You too must accompany us, O tiger among men ! Nay, there you ought to see a marvellous jewel among bows. (7) The bow, which is (so) terrible and supremely effulgent and whose strength (weight) cannot be estimated was actually presented in the former times, O jewel among men, (to a former king of Mithilā, Devarāta by name) in a sacrificial assembly by the gods (who had got it in their turn from Lord Śiva). (8) Neither gods nor Gandharvas nor demons nor ogres are able to bend it, much less human beings. (9) Eager to gauge its strength even very mighty kings and princes failed to bend it. (10) There, O Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), you will (be able to) see that bow of the high-souled king of Mithilā as well as his most wonderful sacrifice, O tiger among men ! (11) That excellent bow, well-formed at the centre (where it is held by the fist), was indeed solicited by the aforesaid king of Mithilā as a reward for the sacrifice and gifted (as such) by all gods*. (12) Worshipped with sandal-pastes of various kinds and incenses emitting the smell of aloe-wood, it stands enshrined in the palace of that king as an object of worship, O scion of Raghu !" (13)

---

* Elsewhere it is stated that the bow was vouchsafed to a king of Mithilā by Lord Śiva Himself. The Padma-Purāṇa, for instance, says :—'चापं शम्भोर्दयादत्तम्.' In the Kūrma-Purāṇa too we read :—

प्रीतश्च भगवानीशस्त्रिशूली नीललोहितः । प्रददौ शत्रुनाशार्थं जनकायाद्भुतं धनुः ॥

एवमुक्त्वा मुनिवरः प्रस्थानमकरोत् तदा । सर्षिसंघः सकाकुत्स्थ आमन्त्र्य वनदेवताः ॥१४॥
स्वस्ति वोऽस्तु गमिष्यामि सिद्धः सिद्धाश्रमादहम् । उत्तरे जाह्नवीतीरे हिमवन्तं शिलोच्चयम् ॥१५॥
इत्युक्त्वा मुनिशार्दूलः कौशिकः स तपोधनः । उत्तरां दिशमुद्दिश्य प्रस्थातुमुपचक्रमे ॥१६॥
तं व्रजन्तं मुनिवरमन्वगादनुसारिणाम् । शकटीशतमात्रं तु प्रयाणे ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ॥१७॥
मृगपक्षिगणाश्चैव सिद्धाश्रमनिवासिनः । अनुजग्मुर्महात्मानं विश्वामित्रं तपोधनम् ॥१८॥
निवर्तयामास ततः सर्षिसंघः स पक्षिणः ।

Saying so (through the other sages), Viśwāmitra (the foremost of sages) presently set out (on the journey) accompanied by a host of Ṛṣis as well as by Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Kakutstha), taking leave of the sylvan deities (in the following words :—) (14) "May good betide you (all)! Accomplished of purpose I shall proceed from Siddhāśrama to the Himalaya mountain on the northern bank of the (holy) Ganga." (15) Having observed thus, the celebrated sage Viśwāmitra (a scion of Kuśa), a tiger among hermits and rich in askesis, made ready to depart in a northerly direction. (16) No less than a hundred carts (full of load consisting mostly of requisites of a sacrifice) belonging to his followers, who were (all) exponents of the Vedas, accompanied Viśwāmitra (the foremost of sages) as he proceeded on his journey. (17) Even herds of beasts and flocks of birds dwelling in the Siddhāśrama followed the high-souled Viśwāmitra, whose (only) wealth was his asceticism. (18) Thereupon Viśwāmitra, accompanied by the host of seers, persuaded the birds (as well as the beasts) to return.

ते गत्वा दूरमध्वानं लम्बमाने दिवाकरे ॥१९॥
वासं चक्रुर्मुनिगणाः शोणकूले समाहिताः । तेऽस्तं गते दिनकरे स्नात्वा हुतहुताशनाः ॥२०॥
विश्वामित्रं पुरस्कृत्य निषेदुरमितौजसः । रामोऽपि सहसौमित्रिर्मुनींस्तानभिपूज्य च ॥२१॥
अग्रतो निषसादाथ विश्वामित्रस्य धीमतः । अथ रामो महातेजा विश्वामित्रं तपोधनम् ॥२२॥
पप्रच्छ मुनिशार्दूलं कौतूहलसमन्वितम् । भगवन् को न्वयं देशः समृद्धवनशोभितः ॥२३॥
श्रोतुमिच्छामि भद्रं ते वक्तुमर्हसि तत्त्वतः ।
नोदितो रामवाक्येन कथयामास सुव्रतः । तस्य देशस्य निखिलमृषिमध्ये महातपाः ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकत्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३१ ॥

Having covered a long distance, the hosts of hermits (accompanying Viśwāmitra) concentrated and the sun (now) declining, broke their journey on the bank of the Sone. Having bathed (in the river) and worshipped the sacred fire when the sun had set, the sages, who were (all) possessed of immense glory, sat down placing Viśwāmitra at their head. Paying their homage to the aforesaid sages and greeting them (all), Śrī Rāma too, accompained by Lakṣmaṇa, presently sat down facing the wise Viśwāmitra. Now Śrī Rāma, who was possessed of exceptional glory, interrogated Viśwāmitra, a tiger among sages, whose (only) wealth consists in his asceticism, with (great) curiosity (as follows) :—"What land could this possibly be, graced with a thriving forest, O venerable sir? I wish to hear (of it). Be pleased to speak accurately (about it). God bless you!" Prompted by the (aforesaid) question of Śrī Rāma, the great ascetic (Viśwāmitra) of noble vows proceeded to speak the whole truth about that land (in the ensuing canto) in the midst of the seers (accompanying him). (19—24)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-one in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्वात्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXII

An account of the four sons of Kuśa; the hundred daughters of Kuśanābha turn hunch-backed under a curse of the wind-god.

ब्रह्मयोनिर्महानासीत् कुशो नाम महातपाः । अक्लिष्टव्रतधर्मज्ञः सज्जनप्रतिपूजकः ॥ १ ॥
स महात्मा कुलीनायां युक्तायां सुमहाबलान् । वैदर्भ्यां जनयामास चतुरः सदृशान् सुतान् ॥ २ ॥
कुशाम्बं कुशनाभं च असूर्तरजसं वसुम् । दीप्तियुक्तान् महोत्साहान् क्षत्रधर्मचिकीर्षया ॥ ३ ॥
तानुवाच कुशः पुत्रान् धर्मिष्ठान् सत्यवादिनः । क्रियतां पालनं पुत्रा धर्मं प्राप्स्यथ पुष्कलम् ॥ ४ ॥
कुशस्य वचनं श्रुत्वा चत्वारो लोकसत्तमाः । निवेशं चक्रिरे सर्वे पुराणां नृवरास्तदा ॥ ५ ॥
कुशाम्बस्तु महातेजाः कौशाम्बीमकरोत् पुरीम् । कुशनाभस्तु धर्मात्मा पुरं चक्रे महोदयम् ॥ ६ ॥
असूर्तरजसो नाम धर्मारण्यं महामतिः । चक्रे पुरवरं राजा वसुनामा गिरिव्रजम् ॥ ७ ॥
एषा वसुमती नाम वसोस्तस्य महात्मनः । एते शैलवराः पञ्च प्रकाशन्ते समन्ततः ॥ ८ ॥
सुमागधी नदी रम्या मगधान् विश्रुताऽऽययौ । पञ्चानां शैलमुख्यानां मध्ये मालेव शोभते ॥ ९ ॥
सैषा हि मागधी राम वसोस्तस्य महात्मनः । पूर्वाभिचरिता राम सुक्षेत्रा सस्यमालिनी ॥ १० ॥

There was a noble and great ascetic of unobstructed vows, Kuśa by name, born of Brahmā, who knew what is right and honoured righteous men. (1) Through his high-born and worthy wife, who hailed from Vidarbha that exalted soul begot four exceptionally mighty sons becoming himself, Kuśāmba, Kuśanābha, Asūrtarajasa* and Vasu, who were not only brilliant and possessed of great zeal but were also extremely pious and veracious. With intent to urge them to their duty of protecting people (appropriate to a Kṣatriya) Kuśa said to them, "The duty of protecting people must be done by you. (Thereby) you will earn undiminished merit." (2—4) Hearing the admonition of Kuśa all those four jewels among men, who were the noblest in the world, forthwith laid the foundation of (four) cities. (5) Kuśāmba, who was possessed of exceptional glory, for his part founded the city of Kauśāmbī (named after himself); while Kuśanābha, whose mind was given to piety, built the city named Mahodaya (the modern Kanauj). (6) Asūrtarajasa built a city, Dharmāraṇya by name; while the prince named Vasu built Girivraja (the modern Rajgir), the foremost of (all) cities. (7) This capital of that high-souled prince, Vasu, was (also) designated (after him) as Vasumati. These five great hills* cast their splendour all round (the city of Girivraja, justifying the appellation given to it). (8) The beautiful and celebrated river (Sone), which spreads its charm like a garland in the midst of these five prominent hills flows (from the west) into the territory of Magadha and is (accordingly) known as the holy Māgadhī. (9) This celebrated river Māgadhī, O Rāma, which flows in an easterly direction and is lined with charming fields (on both sides) and is (thus) adorned with rows of crops, is connected with the same high-souled Vasu, O Rāma! (10)

---

* The author of the famous commentary entitled the "Rāmāyaṇa-Śiromaṇi" has accepted the variant "Amūrtirajasa". In the Mahābhārata (Vana., LXLV. 17) we come across the name Amūrtarayā and the character bearing this name is stated there to have founded the city of Dharmāraṇya, which was encompassed by a sacred forest of the same name. This represents the tract lying round Gaya. The city of Gaya was built by a king named Gaya, who has been referred to as a son of Amūrtarayā. This establishes the identity of Gaya with Dharmāraṇya. In the Mahābhārata (Vana., LXXXIV. 85) the lake Brahmasarovara forming part of the township of Gaya has been declared as surrounded by the forest of Dharmāraṇya. In Vana., LXXXII. 47 worship of the manes has been commended at Dharmāraṇya.

कुशनाभस्तु राजर्षिः कन्याशतमनुत्तमम् । जनयामास धर्मात्मा घृताच्यां रघुनन्दन ॥११॥
तास्तु यौवनशालिन्यो रूपवत्यः स्वलंकृताः । उद्यानभूमिमागम्य प्रावृषीव शतह्रदाः ॥१२॥
गायन्त्यो नृत्यमानाश्च वादयन्त्यस्तु राघव । आमोदं परमं जग्मुर्वराभरणभूषिताः ॥१३॥
अथ ताश्चारुसर्वाङ्ग्यो रूपेणाप्रतिमा भुवि । उद्यानभूमिमागम्य तारा इव घनान्तरे ॥१४॥
ताः सर्वा गुणसम्पन्ना रूपयौवनसंयुताः । दृष्ट्वा सर्वात्मको वायुरिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१५॥
अहं वः कामये सर्वा भार्या मम भविष्यथ । मानुषस्त्यज्यतां भावो दीर्घमायुरवाप्स्यथ ॥१६॥
चलं हि यौवनं नित्यं मानुषेषु विशेषतः । अक्षयं यौवनं प्राप्ता अमर्यश्च भविष्यथ ॥१७॥

The royal sage Kuśanābha, for his part, whose mind was given to righteousness, O scion of Raghu, begot a hundred daughters, excelled by none, through (an Apsarā or celestial nymph named) Ghṛtāchī. (11) With their comeliness enhanced by their attaining maturity they for their part would repair to the grounds of the royal garden duly adorned (with sandal-paste and flowers etc.) and decked with excellent jewels and shining like flashes of lighting during the monsoon, and they experienced supreme delight while singing, dancing and playing on their lutes, O scion of Raghu! (12–13) Lovely of every limb and peerless on earth in comeliness of form they shone like stars in the midst of clouds on reaching the garden grounds. (14) Seeing them all endowed with excellences and rich in beauty and youth (one day), the wind-god, who is bodily present everywhere, addressed the following words (to them):—(15) "I wish to have you all (as my own). You should (therefore) be my wedded wives. The thought that you are human beings should be given up. (In this way) you will attain a long (lease of) life. (16) Indeed youth is ever fleeting, especially in human beings. (If you accept me as your husband) you will attain undecaying (abiding) youth and will become immortal." (17)

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा वायोरक्लिष्टकर्मणः । अपहास्य ततो वाक्यं कन्याशतमथाब्रवीत् ॥१८॥
अन्तश्चरसि भूतानां सर्वेषां सुरसत्तम । प्रभावज्ञाश्च ते सर्वाः किमर्थमवमन्यसे ॥१९॥
कुशनाभसुता देव समस्ताः सुरसत्तम । स्थानाच्च्यावयितुं देवं रक्षामस्तु तपो वयम् ॥२०॥
मा भूत् स कालो दुर्मेधः पितरं सत्यवादिनम् । अवमन्य स्वधर्मेण स्वयं वरमुपास्महे ॥२१॥
पिता हि प्रभुरस्माकं दैवतं परमं च सः । यस्य नो दास्यति पिता स नो भर्ता भविष्यति ॥२२॥
तासां तु वचनं श्रुत्वा हरिः परमकोपनः । प्रविश्य सर्वगात्राणि बभञ्ज भगवान् प्रभुः ॥२३॥

---

* In the Mahābhārata (Sabhā., XXI. 2) these five hills have been named as Vipula, Varāha, Vṛṣabha (Ṛṣabha), Ṛṣigiri (Mātanga) and Chaityaka.

Hearing the aforesaid proposal of the celebrated wind-god, whose activities are (ever) unobstructed, and then deriding his offer, (all) the hundred damsels presently said, "(In the form of life-breath) you move inside all living beings, O jewel among gods! And we are aware of your glory (yet we cherish no attraction for you). Why (then) do you insult us (by making an unseemly offer to us) ? (18-19) We are all daughters of Kuśanābha, O god, the foremost of (all) gods ! We can bring you down from your (exalted) position (by pronouncing a curse on you), yet, even though you are a god, we (are anxious to) preserve our ascetic glory (which is sure to diminish in the event of our cursing you). (20) Let not that (unpropitious) hour (ever) turn up, O evil-minded one, when prompted by lust (our baser nature) we should accept a match of our own initiative, disregrading our veracious father. (21) For father is our master; nay, he is our supreme deity. He (alone) will be our husband, to whom father will give us away." (22) Hearing their (insolent and defiant) reply, however, the all-pervading wind-god, who is not only glorious and powerful but exceedingly irascible (also), entered all their limbs and distorted them. (23)

ताः कन्या वायुना भग्ना विविशुर्नृपतेर्गृहम् । प्रविश्य च सुसम्भ्रान्ताः सलज्जाः सास्रलोचनाः ॥२४॥
स च ता दयिता भग्नाः कन्याः परमशोभनाः । दृष्ट्वा दीनास्तदा राजा सम्भ्रान्त इदमब्रवीत् ॥२५॥
किमिदं कथ्यतां पुत्र्यः को धर्ममवमन्यते ।
कुब्जाः केन कृताः सर्वाश्चेष्टन्त्यो नाभिभाषथ । एवं राजा विनिःश्वस्य समाधि संदधे ततः ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे द्वात्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३२ ॥

Distorted by the wind-god, the aforesaid maidens returned to the king's (their father's) palace. Having entered it, they felt much perturbed and abashed and their eyes were filled with tears. (24) Perplexed to see those beloved and most charming girls deformed and miserable at that moment, the king (Kuśanābha) asked the following question:—(25) "What is this (strange phenomenon) ? The whole thing may be related (to me) who has violated (the principles of) justice ? By whom have you all been turned hunch-backs and how is it that you are all making gestures and do not utter a word ?" Making the aforesaid inquiry and heaving a deep sigh, the king then composed himself (in order to hear their reply). (26)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-two in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रयस्त्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXIII

Kuśanābha applauds the forbearance and forgiveness of his daughters; the story of the birth of Brahmadatta and his marriage with Kuśanābha's daughters.

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा कुशनाभस्य धीमतः । शिरोभिश्चरणौ स्पृष्ट्वा कन्याशतमभाषत ॥ १ ॥
वायुः सर्वात्मको राजन् प्रधर्षयितुमिच्छति । अशुभं मार्गमास्थाय न धर्मं प्रत्यवेक्षते ॥ २ ॥

पितृमत्यः स्म भद्रं ते स्वच्छन्दे न वयं स्थिताः । पितरं नो वृणीष्व त्वं यदि नो दास्यते तव ॥ ३ ॥
तेन पापानुबन्धेन वचनं न प्रतीच्छता । एवं ब्रुवन्त्यः सर्वाः स्म वायुनाभिहता भृशम् ॥ ४ ॥
तासां तु वचनं श्रुत्वा राजा परमधार्मिकः । प्रत्युवाच महातेजाः कन्याशतमनुत्तमम् ॥ ५ ॥
क्षान्तं क्षमावतां पुत्र्यः कर्तव्यं सुमहत् कृतम् । ऐकमत्यमुपागम्य कुलं चावेक्षितं मम ॥ ६ ॥
अलंकारो हिं नारीणां क्षमा तु पुरुषस्य वा । दुष्करं तच्च वै क्षान्तं त्रिदशेषु विशेषतः ॥ ७ ॥
यादृशी वः क्षमा पुत्र्यः सर्वासामविशेषतः । क्षमा दानं क्षमा सत्यं क्षमा यज्ञाश्च पुत्रिकाः ॥ ८ ॥
क्षमा यशः क्षमा धर्मः क्षमायां विष्ठितं जगत् ।

Hearing the aforesaid question of the celebrated and wise Kuśanābha, (all) the hundred maidens touched his feet with their heads and replied (as follows):—(1) "Resorting to the evil path, the all-pervading wind-god, Your Majesty, sought to violate us and did not respect our righteous behaviour. (2) (We said to him,) 'May good betide you, we are dependent on our father and (as such) are not masters of our own will. Ask you us of our father; we shall (certainly) accept you (as our husband) if he gives us away to you.' Pleading thus we were hit hard (deformed) by him of wicked intent, who did not heed our remonstrance." (3-4) Hearing their complaint, the king, for his part, who was exceedingly pious and exceptionally glorious, replied (as follows) to his hundred daughters, excelled by none:—"The act of forbearance done by you, which can be done (only) by those given to forgiveness, my daughters, was extremely noble (on your part). And the fact that the honour of my race was vindicated by you by resorting to unanimity (on this point) was (also) a unique achievement (on your part). (5-6) For forbearance is the ornament indeed of womankind as well as of man. And such forbearance particularly with reference to gods as exists in you all without distinction, O my daughters, is difficult to practise. Forbearance is really charity, forbearance is (devotion to) truth, and forbearance constitutes (all) sacrifices, my beloved daughters! (7-8) Forbearance is fame, forbearance is piety; (nay) the (entire) creation is established in forbearance (crystallized in the form of the earth)."

विसृज्य कन्याः काकुत्स्थ राजा त्रिदशविक्रमः ॥ ९ ॥
मन्त्रज्ञो मन्त्रयामास प्रदानं सह मन्त्रिभिः । देशे काले च कर्तव्यं सदृशे प्रतिपादनम् ॥१०॥
एतस्मिन्नेव काले तु चूली नाम महाद्युतिः । ऊर्ध्वरेताः शुभाचारो ब्राह्मं तप उपागमत् ॥११॥
तपस्यन्तमृषिं तत्र गन्धर्वी पर्युपासते । सोमदा नाम भद्रं ते ऊर्मिलातनया तदा ॥१२॥
सा च तं प्रणता भूत्वा शुश्रूषणपरायणा । उवास काले धर्मिष्ठा तस्यास्तुष्टोऽभवद् गुरुः ॥१३॥
स च तां कालयोगेन प्रोवाच रघुनन्दन । परितुष्टोऽस्मि भद्रं ते किं करोमि तव प्रियम् ॥१४॥
परितुष्टं मुनिं ज्ञात्वा गन्धर्वी मधुरस्वरम् । उवाच परमप्रीता वाक्यज्ञा वाक्यकोविदम् ॥१५॥

Having sent away the girls (to the gynaeceum). O scion of Kakutstha, the king (Kuśanābha), who possessed the prowess of gods and was adept in deliberation, discussed the question of their marriage with his counsellors since it was necessary to give them away to a worthy man at the proper place and time. (9-10) At this (very) time a Brahmachārī (*lit.*, one who has turned the flow of his generative fluid up wards and never allowed it to escape), Chūlī by name, who was exceptionally glorious and given to virtuous conduct, actually embarked upon a course of austerities* (in the form of meditation) directed towards the realization of Brahma. (11) At that (very) place, during the period of his askesis, may good betide you, a Gandharva girl, Somadā by name, daughter of Ūrmilā, waited upon the Ṛṣi (in the hope of securing his goodwill) while he was (busy) practising his austerities. (12) Bending low before him and devoted to his service, that most pious girl waited upon him at the right time (whenever her presence was needed by him). The venerable sage got pleased with her. (13) And when the propitious hour came, the sage, O scion of Raghu, said to the girl, "I am highly pleased (with your innocent services), may all be well with you! What service can I do to you?" (14) Supremely delighted to know the sage much gratified, the eloquent Gandharva girl spoke (as follows.) in a sweet voice to the seer, who was a master of speech :—(15)

लक्ष्म्या समुदितो ब्राह्म्या ब्रह्मभूतो महातपाः । ब्राह्मेण तपसा युक्तं पुत्रमिच्छामि धार्मिकम् ॥१६॥
अपतिश्चास्मि भद्रं ते भार्या चास्मि न कस्यचित् । ब्राह्मेणोपगतायाश्च दातुमर्हसि मे सुतम् ॥१७॥
तस्याः प्रसन्नो ब्रह्मर्षिर्ददौ ब्राह्ममनुत्तमम् । ब्रह्मदत्त इति ख्यातं मानसं चूलिनः सुतम् ॥१८॥
स राजा ब्रह्मदत्तस्तु पुरीमध्यवसत् तदा । काम्पिल्यां परया लक्ष्म्या देवराजो यथा दिवम् ॥१९॥
स बुद्धिं कृतवान् राजा कुशनाभः सुधार्मिकः । ब्रह्मदत्ताय काकुत्स्थ दातुं कन्याशतं तदा ॥२०॥
तमाहूय महातेजा ब्रह्मदत्तं महीपतिः । ददौ कन्याशतं राजा सुप्रीतेनान्तरात्मना ॥२१॥

"A great ascetic illumined with Brahmic (spiritual) splendour, you have become one with the Infinite. (Hence) I seek (from you) a pious son rich in askesis (in the form of meditation) directed towards the realization of Brahma (the Absolute). (16) As for myself I am unmarried nor shall I be the wife of any. (Therefore) let your grace descend on me. Be pleased to grant me a son by dint of your Brahmic (spiritual) glory, since I have sought refuge in you." (17) Full of delight, the Brahman sage Chūlina (a variant of Chūlī) conferred on her a mind-born son, rich in askesis (in the form of meditation) directed towards the realization of Brahma, excelled by none and known by the name of Brahmadatta. (18) Invested with supreme (royal) splendour, the said Brahmadatta for his part lived at that time as king in the city of Kāmpilyā (built by Kampila) as Indra (the ruler of gods) does in paradise. (19) The aforesaid Kuśanābha, a most pious king, at that time made up his mind, O scion of Kakutstha, to give away (all) his hundred daughters to Brahmadatta. (20) Calling the said Brahmadatta, the exceptionally glorious king (Kuśanābha), the ruler of the earth, gave away with a most cheerful mind (all) the hundred girls (to him). (21)

यथाक्रमं तदा पाणिं जग्राह रघुनन्दन । ब्रह्मदत्तो महीपालस्तासां देवपतिर्यथा ॥२२॥
स्पृष्टमात्रे तदा पाणौ विकुब्जा विगतज्वराः । युक्तं परमया लक्ष्म्या बभौ कन्याशतं तदा ॥२३॥
स दृष्ट्वा वायुना मुक्ताः कुशनाभो महीपतिः । बभूव परमप्रीतो हर्षं लेभे पुनः पुनः ॥२४॥
कृतोद्वाहं तु राजानं ब्रह्मदत्तं महीपतिम् । सदारं प्रेषयामास सोपाध्यायगणं तदा ॥२५॥
सोमदापि सुतं दृष्ट्वा पुत्रस्य सदृशीं क्रियाम् ।
यथान्यायं च गन्धर्वी स्नुषास्ताः प्रत्यनन्दत । स्पृष्ट्वा स्पृष्ट्वा च ताः कन्याः कुशनाभं प्रशस्य च ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे त्रयस्त्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३३ ॥

---

* There is a Smṛti text which runs as under :—

मनसश्चेन्द्रियाणां च ह्यैकाग्र्यं परमं तपः ।

"One-pointedness of the mind and the senses constitutes the highest form of askesis."

At the time of marriage, O scion of Raghu, King Brahmadatta, who shone like Indra (the ruler of gods), married them (one after another by taking their hands in his) in order of seniority. (22) The moment their hands were touched (by Brahmadatta) in the course of the wedding the girls were cured of their deformity and rid of their agony. Invested with supreme splendour (all) the hundred girls shone brightly at that time. (23) King Kuśanābha was highly pleased to see them freed from morbid affection of the windy humour in their body and experienced joy again and again. (24) He then sent away (to his own capital) King Brahmadatta, the delighter of his subjects, along with his wedded wives and the host of his family priests, as soon as he was actually married. (25) Seeing the union of his son worthy of him, Somadā, the Gandharva damsel, too joyfully greeted her son as well as her aforesaid daughters-in-law (one after another) in order of seniority and, embracing the said brides again and again and applauding Kuśanābha (for his hospitality and rich dowry), departed. (26)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-three in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुस्त्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXIV

Kuśanābha performs a sacrifice for the birth of a son and is blessed with one, Gādhi by name; the glory of the river Kauśikī (the modern Kosi in Bihar).

कृतोद्वाहे गते तस्मिन् ब्रह्मदत्ते च राघव । अपुत्रः पुत्रलाभाय पौत्रीमिष्टिमकल्पयत् ॥ १ ॥
इष्ट्यां तु वर्तमानायां कुशनाभं महीपतिम् । उवाच परमोदारः कुशो ब्रह्मसुतस्तदा ॥ २ ॥
पुत्रस्ते सदृशः पुत्र भविष्यति सुधार्मिकः । गाधिं प्राप्स्यसि तेन त्वं कीर्तिं लोके च शाश्वतीम् ॥ ३ ॥
एवमुक्त्वा कुशो राम कुशनाभं महीपतिम् । जगामाकाशमाविश्य ब्रह्मलोकं सनातनम् ॥ ४ ॥
कस्यचित् त्वथ कालस्य कुशनाभस्य धीमतः । जज्ञे परमधर्मिष्ठो गाधिरित्येव नामतः ॥ ५ ॥
स पिता मम काकुत्स्थ गाधिः परमधार्मिकः । कुशवंशप्रसूतोऽस्मि कौशिको रघुनन्दन ॥ ६ ॥
पूर्वजा भगिनी चापि मम राघव सुव्रता । नाम्ना सत्यवती नाम ऋचीके प्रतिपादिता ॥ ७ ॥

The aforesaid Brahmadatta having left after being married, O scion of Raghu, Kuśanābha (who had no male issue) embarked upon a sacrifice intended to procure a son with the object of securing a male issue. (1) In the meantime, while the sacrifice was actually going on, the highly magnanimous Kuśa (the father of Kuśanābha and) son of Brahmā (the creator) prophesied to King Kuśanābha as follows):—(2) "A most pious son, worthy of you, will be born to you, my son ! You will have Gādhi (for your son) and thereby attain undying glory in the world." (3) Informing King Kuśanābha accordingly, O Rāma, Kuśa withdrew to the immortal Satyaloka (the realm of Brahmā, from which he had obviously come), coursing through the air. (4) After some time indeed a most pious son, Gādhi by name, the very name given by Kuśa, was born to the wise Kuśanābha. (5)

That exceedingly pious man, Gādhi (by name) was my father, O descendant of Kakutstha! (And) descended in the line of Kuśa I am known as Kauśika, O scion of Raghu! (6) I had an elder sister too of noble vows, known by the name of Satyavatī and given away to the sage Ṛchīka. (7)

सशरीरा गता स्वर्गं भर्तारमनुवर्तिनी । कौशिकी परमोदारा प्रवृत्ता च महानदी ॥ ८ ॥
दिव्या पुण्योदका रम्या हिमवन्तमुपाश्रिता । लोकस्य हितकार्यार्थं प्रवृत्ता भगिनी मम ॥ ९ ॥
ततोऽहं हिमवत्पार्श्वे वसामि नियतः सुखम् । भगिन्यां स्नेहसंयुक्तः कौशिक्यां रघुनन्दन ॥१०॥
सा तु सत्यवती पुण्या सत्ये धर्मे प्रतिष्ठिता । पतिव्रता महाभागा कौशिकी सरितां वरा ॥११॥
अहं हि नियमाद् राम हित्वा तां समुपागतः । सिद्धाश्रममनुप्राप्तः सिद्धोऽस्मि तव तेजसा ॥१२॥
एषा राम ममोत्पत्तिः स्वस्य वंशस्य कीर्तिता । देशस्य हि महाबाहो यन्मां त्वं परिपृच्छसि ॥१३॥

Following (as she did) the wishes of her husband (throughout her life) my sister bodily ascended to heaven and (later on) turned into a most beneficent and delightful great river,—Kauśikī (the modern Kosi), flowing by the side of the Himalayas, unearthly in character, whose waters confer merit (on those using it),—and is (thus) engaged in doing good to the world. (8–9) Full of affection for my sister I had been happily leading a life of self-discipline since then by the side of the Himalayas on the banks of the Kauśikī, O scion of Raghu! (10) That pious and highly blessed lady, Satyavatī, who was established in the virtue of truthfulness and (exclusively) devoted to her husband, is still extant in the form of Kauśikī, the foremost of rivers. (11) Leaving that river I came down (to the plains) because of my vow (to perform a sacrifice at some consecrated spot) and arrived at Siddhāśrama, where I got accomplished of my purpose by dint of your glory (might). (12) In this way has been told (by me) my birth (from the loins of Gādhi), the genesis of my race (from Kuśa, son of Brahmā) and the history of the land (of Girivraja extending along the bank of the Sone), which your asked me in particular, O mighty-armed Rāma! (13)

गतोऽर्धरात्रः काकुत्स्थ कथाः कथयतो मम । निद्रामभ्येहि भद्रं ते मा भूद् विघ्नोऽध्वनीह नः ॥१४॥
निष्पन्दास्तरवः सर्वे निलीना मृगपक्षिणः । नैशेन तमसा व्याप्ता दिशश्च रघुनन्दन ॥१ ॥
शनैर्विसृज्यते संध्या नभो नेत्रैरिवावृतम् । नक्षत्रतारागहनं ज्योतिर्भिरवभासते ॥१६॥
उत्तिष्ठते च शीतांशुः शशी लोकतमोनुदः । ह्लादयन् प्राणिनां लोके मनांसि प्रभया स्वया ॥१७॥
नैशानि सर्वभूतानि प्रचरन्ति ततस्ततः । यक्षराक्षससंघाश्च रौद्राश्च पिशिताशनाः ॥१८॥
एवमुक्त्वा महातेजा विरराम महामुनिः । साधु साध्विति ते सर्वे मुनयो ह्यभ्यपूजयन् ॥१९॥
कुशिकानामयं वंशो महान् धर्मपरः सदा । ब्रह्मोपमा महात्मानः कुशवंश्या नरोत्तमाः ॥२०॥
विशेषेण भवानेव विश्वामित्र महायशः । कौशिकी सरितां श्रेष्ठा कुलोद्द्योतकरी तव ॥२१॥
मुदितैर्मुनिशार्दूलैः प्रशस्तः कुशिकात्मजः । निद्रामुपागमच्छ्रीमानस्तंगत इवांशुमान् ॥२२॥
रामोऽपि सहसौमित्रिः किंचिदागतविस्मयः । प्रशस्य मुनिशार्दूलं निद्रां समुपसेवते ॥२३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे चतुस्त्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३४ ॥

"Half of the night has passed in my narrating (past) episodes, O scion of Kakutstha! Peace be with you! (Now) go to sleep. Let there be no interference in this journey of ours (due to torpor caused by sleeplessness). (14) All the trees are motionless, the beasts and birds are buried in sleep and the quarters stand enveloped in the darkness of night, O scion of Raghu ! (15) The evening twilight has gradually receded and the firmament, thick set with lunar mansions and (other) stars, is shining with the heavenly bodies as though covered with (innumerable) eyes. (16) The moon, which dispels the darkness of the world (at night), is (just) rising*, diffusing its cool rays and delighting the minds of (all) living beings in the world by its (soothing and refreshing) splendour. (17) All nocturnal beings, *viz*, fearful hosts of Yakṣas and Rākṣasas as well as fiends (feeding on raw flesh) are freely roaming here and there." (18) Saying so, the exceptionally glorious and great sage (Viśwāmitra), became silent and all the aforesaid sages (who accompanied him) applauded him saying "Well spoken ! Good !! (19) Great is this race of Kuśa and ever given to righteousness (too). The high-souled kings descended in the line of Kuśa have been as good as Brahman Ṛṣis. (20) You, O highly illustrious Viśwāmitra (who have attained Brahmanhood by dint of your austerities), are particularly so. And Kauśikī, the foremost of rivers, has added to the lustre of your race." (21) Extolled (thus) by the foremost of sages, (who were) full of delight, the glorious Viśwāmitra (the son of Gādhi, a scion of Kuśa) fell asleep (even) as the sun sinks below the horizon. (22) Glorifying Viśwāmitra (a tiger among sages), Śrī Rāma too, who felt a bit amazed (to hear the family history of Viśwāmitra), courted sleep along with Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā). (23)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-four in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चत्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXV

Crossing the Sone, Viśwāmitra and party reach the bank of the holy Ganga and spend the night there. Requested by Śrī Rāma, he narrates the story of the origin of the Ganga.

उपास्य रात्रिशेषं तु शोणाकूले महर्षिभिः । निशायां सुप्रभातायां विश्वामित्रोऽभ्यभाषत ॥ १ ॥
सुप्रभाता निशा राम पूर्वा संध्या प्रवर्तते । उत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भद्रं ते गमनायाभिरोचय ॥ २ ॥
तच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य कृतपूर्वाह्णिकक्रियः । गमनं रोचयामास वाक्यं चेदमुवाच ह ॥ ३ ॥
अयं शोणः शुभजलोगाधः पुलिनमण्डितः । कतरेण पथा ब्रह्मन् संतरिष्यामहे वयम् ॥ ४ ॥
एवमुक्तस्तु रामेण विश्वामित्रोऽब्रवीदिदम् । एष पन्था मयोद्दिष्टो येन यान्ति महर्षयः ॥ ५ ॥

Having reposed for the rest of the night on the bank of the Sone along with the great Ṛṣis (who accompanied him on the journey), Viśwāmitra spoke (as follows) on the night having culminated in a beautiful sunrise :—(1) "The night has ended in a lovely dawn, O Rāma ! The morning twilight has set in. Get up, arise and make yourself inclined to proceed (further). May prosperity attend you !" (2) Hearing his instruction as aforesaid and having finished his morning duties

---

* From the above description it can be easily inferred that it was the ninth night of a dark fortnight.

(Sandhyā etc.), Śrī Rāma made himself inclined to leave (for the journey) and spoke the following words: so the tradition goes:—(3) "The river Sone, whose waters are so holy, is fordable here and (as such) adorned with sandy banks. By which of the two fords (appearing before us) shall we wade through it, O holy sir ?" (4) Questioned thus by Śrī Rāma, Viśwāmitra indeed replied as follows:—"Here is the ford (already) pointed out by me, through which the great Ṛṣis (over there) are wading." (5)

ते गत्वा दूरमध्वानं गतेऽर्धदिवसे तदा । जाह्नवीं सरितां श्रेष्ठां ददृशुर्मुनिसेविताम् ॥ ६ ॥
तां दृष्ट्वा पुण्यसलिलां हंससारससेविताम् । बभूवुर्मुनयः सर्वे मुदिताः सहराघवाः ॥ ७ ॥
तस्यास्तीरे तदा सर्वे चक्रुर्वासपरिग्रहम् । ततः स्नात्वा यथान्यायं संतर्प्य पितृदेवताः ॥ ८ ॥
हुत्वा चैवाग्निहोत्राणि प्राश्य चामृतवद्धविः । विविशुर्जाह्नवीतीरे शुभा मुदितमानसाः ॥ ९ ॥
विश्वामित्रं महात्मानं परिवार्य समन्ततः ।
विष्ठिताश्च यथान्यायं राघवौ च यथार्हतः । सम्प्रहृष्टमना रामो विश्वामित्रमथाब्रवीत् ॥१०॥
भगवञ्छ्रोतुमिच्छामि गङ्गां त्रिपथगां नदीम् । त्रैलोक्यं कथमाक्रम्य गता नदनदीपतिम् ॥११॥
चोदितो रामवाक्येन विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । वृद्धिं जन्म च गङ्गाया वक्तुमेवोपचक्रमे ॥१२॥

Then (having crossed the Sone at the spot mentioned by Viśwāmitra and) traversed a long way (further), the party sighted the Ganga, the foremost of (all) rivers, resorted to by sages, in the afternoon. (6) The sages including Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Raghu), were all rejoiced to see the celebrated river, whose waters confer merit (on those who resort to them) and which was frequented by swans and cranes. (7-8) On the bank of that river all (of them) forthwith broke their journey. Having then bathed (in the river) according to the scriptural ordinance, (*i. e.*, after reciting a Vedic hymn known as the Aghamarṣaṇa-Sūkta—*vide* Ṛgveda X. 190), duly propitiated the manes and gods (including Ṛṣis) with libations of water and also poured oblations into the sacred fire and partaken of the remnants of the sacrifice, which have been likened* to ambrosia (in the Śāstras), the blessed Ṛṣis sat down on the bank of the Ganga with a cheerful mind surrounding the high-souled Viśwāmitra on all sides. When they were (all) comfortably seated in order of seniority as also Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Raghu) according to their position, Śrī Rāma presently addressed Viśwāmitra (as follows) with an overjoyed mind:—(9-10) "I wish to hear, O venerable sir, about the (holy) river Ganga, which takes a threefold course (flowing as it does through heaven, the earth and the subterranean regions), how having coursed through the three worlds (*viz*, heaven and earth and the space intervening the two) it meets the ocean (the ruler of rivers, both big and small)." (11) Impelled by the inquiry of Śrī Rāma, the great sage Viśwāmitra started discoursing (as follows) on the origin as well as on the expansion of the (holy) Ganga. (12)

शैलेन्द्रो हिमवान् राम धातूनामाकरो महान् । तस्य कन्याद्वयं राम रूपेणाप्रतिमं भुवि ॥१३॥

---

* *Vide Bhagavadgītā:* यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् । (IV. 31)

"Those partaking of ambrosia in the form of the remnants of a sacrifice attain the everlasting Brahma."

या मेरुदुहिता राम तयोर्माता सुमध्यमा । नाम्ना मेना मनोज्ञा वै पत्नी हिंमवतः प्रिया ॥१४॥
तस्यां गङ्गेयमभवज्ज्येष्ठा हिमवतः सुता । उमा नाम द्वितीयाभूत् कन्या तस्यैव राघव ॥१५॥
अथ ज्येष्ठां सुराः सर्वे देवकार्यचिकीर्षया । शैलेन्द्रं वरयामासुर्गङ्गां त्रिपथगां नदीम् ॥१६॥
ददौ धर्मेण हिमवांस्तनयां लोकपावनीम् । स्वच्छन्दपथगां गङ्गां त्रैलोक्यहितकाम्यया ॥१७॥
प्रतिगृह्य त्रिलोकार्थे त्रिलोकहितकाङ्क्षिणः । गङ्गामादाय तेऽगच्छन् कृतार्थेनान्तरात्मना ॥१८॥

"There stands (on the extreme north of India) O Rāma, the great Himalaya, the king of mountains and a storehouse of minerals. A couple of daughters, matchless in beauty on earth, were born to (the deity presiding over) the said mountain, O Rāma ! (13) The charming and beloved consort of Himavān (the deity presiding over the Himalayas), Menā by name, who was marked by a slender waist and was the daughter of Mount Meru, was their mother, O Rāma ! (14) The elder daughter of Himavān, born through her, was this Ganga. A second daughter, Umā by name, was born to the selfsame Himavān, O scion of Raghu ! (15) With the intention of accomplishing (through her) the purpose of gods all the gods presently asked Himavān (the king of mountains) for the elder (of the two), *viz*, Ganga, who (later) turned into a river that follows a threefold course. (16) From considerations of piety (according to which the solicitation of a supplicant is not to be rejected) and out of solicitude for the welfare of the three worlds Himavān gave (in adoption to gods) his daughter, Ganga, who is capable of purifying the world and who could carve her way (even through the air and the subterranean regions) according to her own free will. (17) Accepting the gift (so readily given by the pious Himavān) in the interest of the three worlds and taking the Ganga (with them), the gods, who wished well of the three worlds, left with their mind (fully) satisfied. (18)

या चान्या शैलदुहिता कन्याऽऽसीद् रघुनन्दन । उग्रं सुव्रतमास्थाय तपस्तेपे तपोधना ॥१९॥
उग्रेण तपसा युक्तां ददौ शैलवरः सुताम् । रुद्रायाप्रतिरूपायं उमां लोकनमस्कृताम् ॥२०॥
एते ते शैलराजस्य सुते लोकनमस्कृते । गङ्गा च सरितां श्रेष्ठा उमा देवी च राघव ॥२१॥
एतत् ते सर्वमाख्यातं यथा त्रिपथगामिनी । खं गता प्रथमं तात गतिं गतिमतां वर ॥२२॥
सैषा सुरनदी रम्या शैलेन्द्रतनया तदा । सुरलोकं समारूढा विपापा जलवाहिनी ॥२३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे पञ्चत्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३५ ॥

"The other daughter of Himavān, who looked upon askesis as Her (only) wealth, O scion of Raghu, practised austerities (in the shape of meditation on Lord Śiva) while remaining a virgin and observing a noble and formidable vow (for forgoing even dry leaves to keep Her body and soul together). (19) Himavān (the chief of mountains) gave away to Lord Rudra (the god of destruction), who has no rival, this daughter, Umā, who was rich in severe asceticism and adored by the universe. (20) Ganga, the foremost of rivers, and Goddess Umā, these are the two well-known daughters of Himavān (the king of mountains), who are venerated by the (whole) universe, O scion of Raghu ! (21) In this way everything (connected with the origin of Ganga) has been narrated to you. (Now) hear how it followed a threefold course. In the first place (as I have told you in verse 18 above), O dear Rāma, it rose into the sky, which allows moving space to (all) mobile beings

(along with the gods who took her away to heaven). Then this celebrated daughter of Himavān (the king of mountains) rose to heaven (the realm of gods) in the form of the delightful Mandākinī (the heavenly stream visible in the form of the milky way) and (last of all) assumed the form of an earthly stream (Ganga) capable of ridding the world of its sins. (22-23)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-five in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षट्त्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXVI

Gods interrupt the amorous pastimes of Lord Śiva and His Consort, Goddess Umā, on which She curses gods including Mother Earth.

उक्तवाक्ये मुनौ तस्मिन्नुभौ राघवलक्ष्मणौ । प्रतिनन्द्य कथां वीरावूचतुर्मुनिपुंगवम् ॥ १ ॥
धर्मयुक्तमिदं ब्रह्मन् कथितं परमं त्वया ।
दुहितुः शैलराजस्य ज्येष्ठाया वक्तुमर्हसि । विस्तरं विस्तरज्ञोऽसि दिव्यमानुषसम्भवम् ॥ २ ॥
त्रीन् पथो हेतुना केन प्लावयेल्लोकपावनी । कथं गङ्गा त्रिपथगा विश्रुता सरिदुत्तमा ॥ ३ ॥
त्रिषु लोकेषु धर्मज्ञ कर्मभिः कैः समन्विता । तथा ब्रुवति काकुत्स्थे विश्वामित्रस्तपोधनः ॥ ४ ॥
निखिलेन कथां सर्वामृषिमध्ये न्यवेदयत् ।

The aforesaid sage (Viśwāmitra) having concluded his speech, both the heroes, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, hailed with joy the story (of the two daughters of Himavān, told by him) and spoke (as follows) to Viśwāmitra (the foremost of sages) :—(1) "You have narrated, holy sir, this most excellent story capable of conferring merit (on those who hear it). Be pleased (now) to give a detailed account of Ganga (the elder daughter of Himavān), relating to her celestial and earthly career, since you know these details. (2) With what motive did that world-purifying stream (choose to) wash (all) the three regions (heaven, earth and the space intervening them) ? How did the Ganga, which takes a threefold course, come to be known as the foremost of rivers ? (3) With what achievements is she associated in the three worlds, O knower of Dharma (what is right) ?" While Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) was speaking thus, Viśwāmitra, who claims askesis as his (only) wealth, narrated *in extenso* in the midst of the Ṛṣis (that accompanied him) the whole story (as follows) :—

पुरा राम कृतोद्वाहः शितिकण्ठो महातपाः ॥ ५ ॥
दृष्ट्वा च भगवान् देवीं मैथुनायोपचक्रमे ।
तस्य संक्रीडमानस्य महादेवस्य धीमतः । शितिकण्ठस्य देवस्य दिव्यं वर्षशतं गतम् ॥ ६ ॥
न चापि तनयो राम तस्यामासीत् परंतप । सर्वे देवाः समुद्युक्ताः पितामहपुरोगमाः ॥ ७ ॥
यदिहोत्पद्यते भूतं कस्तत् प्रतिसहिष्यति । अभिगम्य सुराः सर्वे प्रणिपत्येदमब्रुवन् ॥ ८ ॥
देवदेव महादेव लोकस्यास्य हिते रत । सुराणां प्रणिपातेन प्रसादं कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ ९ ॥

न लोका धारयिष्यन्ति तव तेजः सुरोत्तम । ब्राह्मेण तपसा युक्तो देव्या सह तपश्चर ॥१०॥
त्रैलोक्यहितकामार्थं तेजस्तेजसि धारय । रक्ष सर्वानिमाँल्लोकान् नालोकं कर्तुमर्हसि ॥११॥

"Seeing Goddess Pārvatī (by His side), O Rāma, Lord Śiva (who bears a blue patch on His throat, nay,) who is noted for His great asceticism and had (just) married Her, devoted Himself to the delights of conjugal bliss. A hundred celestial years (equivalent to 36,000 human years) rolled past the all-wise Lord Śiva, the Supreme Deity, while He sported (with His Spouse). (4—6) Neither any son nor any daughter was, however, born of Her, O Rāma, the chastiser of foes! All the gods with Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation) as their leader girded up their loins to stop the amorous sport. For, they said to themselves, 'Who will (be able to) bear (the glory of) the offspring that is born of this (divine) Lady?' Approaching Him and falling prostrate (before Him), all the gods addressed (to Him) the following prayer:—'O Supreme Lord, the adored of (all) gods, devoted (as You are) to the good of this universe, be pleased to extend Your grace to (us), gods, in response to our prostrations. (7—9) The worlds (or their denizens) will not (be able to) bear Your glory (in the shape of Your progeny), O Chief of gods! (Therefore) rich (as You are) in askesis in the form of oneness with Brahma (desist from enjoying the delights of connubial bliss and) practise austerities along with Your (Divine) Consort. (10) For the welfare of (all) the three worlds, which is Your (chief) concern, (pray) retain Your vital energy in Your own glorious Self and (thereby) preserve all these worlds (from destruction, for the son that will be born to You will be extremely glorious and will burn all the three worlds). (Pray) do not bring about the extinction of the worlds." (11)

देवतानां वचः श्रुत्वा सर्वलोकमहेश्वरः । बाढमित्यब्रवीत् सर्वान् पुनश्चेदमुवाच ह ॥१२॥
धारयिष्याम्यहं तेजस्तेजसैव सहोमया । त्रिदशाः पृथिवी चैव निर्वाणमधिगच्छतु ॥१३॥
यदिदं क्षुभितं स्थानान्मम तेजो ह्यनुत्तमम् । धारयिष्यति कस्तन्मे ब्रुवन्तु सुरसत्तमाः ॥१४॥
एवमुक्तास्ततो देवाः प्रत्यूचुर्वृषभध्वजम् । यत्तेजः क्षुभितं ह्यद्य तद् धरा धारयिष्यति ॥१५॥
एवमुक्तः सुरपतिः प्रमुमोच महाबलः । तेजसा पृथिवी येन व्याप्ता सगिरिकानना ॥१६॥
ततो देवाः पुनरिदमूचुश्चापि हुताशनम् । आविश त्वं महातेजो रौद्रं वायुसमन्वितः ॥१७॥
तदग्निना पुनर्व्याप्तं संजातं श्वेतपर्वतम् । दिव्यं शरवणं चैव पावकादित्यसंनिभम् ॥१८॥
यत्र जातो महातेजाः कार्तिकेयोऽग्निसम्भवः ।

"Hearing the remonstrance of the gods Lord Śiva (the suzerain 'Lord of all the worlds) said 'Amen!' and further addressed the following words to them all: so the tradition goes:—'I along with Umā shall retain Our vital energy by dint of Our very glory (retentive power). Let the terrestrial globe as also the other worlds, O gods, live in peace (free from fear of destruction). (12–13) (But) Who shall receive that vital fluid of Mine, unsurpassed as it is, which is already shaken from its seat (in the heart), ? Tell Me this, O jewels among gods!' (14) Questioned thus (by Lord Śiva) the gods thereupon replied to Lord Śiva (whose ensign bears the device of a bull), 'Earth (who is capable of holding everything) will indeed receive the vital fluid that has got dislodged so far.' (15) Addressed thus (by the gods), the almighty Lord Śiva (the Ruler of gods) let fall His seed, by which was covered the (entire) globe including the mountains and forests. (16) Thereupon (fearing lest the earth may be cracked by being covered all over by the powerful fluid) the gods further addressed the following prayer to the god of fire (that feeds on the sacrificial offerings) :—'Accompanied by the wind-god (and mobilized by him) suck you the mighty seed of Rudra (the god of destruction).' (17) Concentrated by fire (assisted by the wind-god), it now got consolidated into a white mountain and was (subsequently) transformed into a thicket of white reeds resplendent as fire and the sun, in which was born the exceptionally glorious Kārtikeya (so called because he was suckled later on by the deities presiding over the group of stars known by the name of Kṛttikās), who is (accordingly) spoken of as fire-born.

अथोमां च शिवं चैव देवाः सर्षिगणास्तथा ॥१९॥
पूजयामासुरत्यर्थं सुप्रीतमनसस्तदा । अथ शैलसुता राम त्रिदशानिदमब्रवीत् ॥२०॥
समन्युरशपत् सर्वान् क्रोधसंरक्तलोचना । यस्मान्निवारिता चाहं संगता पुत्रकाम्यया ॥२१॥
अपत्यं स्वेषु दारेषु नोत्पादयितुमर्हथ । अद्यप्रभृति युष्माकमप्रजाः सन्तु पत्नयः ॥२२॥
एवमुक्त्वा सुरान् सर्वान् शशाप पृथिवीमपि । अवने नैकरूपा त्वं बहुभार्या भविष्यसि ॥२३॥
न च पुत्रकृतां प्रीतिं मत्क्रोधकलुषीकृता । प्राप्स्यसि त्वं सुदुर्मेधो मम पुत्रमनिच्छती ॥२४॥
तान् सर्वान् पीडितान् दृष्ट्वा सुरान् सुरपतिस्तदा । गमनायोपचक्राम दिशं वरुणपालिताम् ॥२५॥
स गत्वा तप आतिष्ठत् पार्श्वे तस्योत्तरे गिरेः । हिमवत्प्रभवे शृङ्गे सह देव्या महेश्वरः ॥२६॥
एष ते विस्तरो राम शैलपुत्र्या निवेदितः । गङ्गायाः प्रभवं चैव शृणु मे सहलक्ष्मण ॥२७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे षट्त्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३६ ॥

"Highly delighted in mind on that occasion, the gods including the hosts of Ṛṣis (that accompanied them) now profusely worshipped Umā and even so Lord Śiva. Thereupon Umā (Daughter of Himavān) with eyes bloodshot through anger pronounced an imprecation on all gods and angrily addressed them (as follows) :—'Since I, who was united with My Spouse with the desire of getting a son, have been deterred (from the act by you), you shall no longer be able to beget an offspring through your (respective) consorts. Let your wives remain issueless from this day.' (18—22) Having addressed all the gods as aforesaid, she cursed Earth too (in the following words) :—'You will have a multiform surface, O earth, and shall have many masters. (23) Agitated by My curse, nor shall you enjoy the delight of having a son*, O highly evil-minded lady, since you do not wish that I should have a son.' (24) Seeing all those gods tormented (by the curse of His Spouse) Lord Śiva (the Ruler of gods) prepared to proceed in a westerly direction (the quarter ruled over by Varuṇa, the god of water). (25) Going there the celebrated Lord Śiva (the supreme Divinity) took to asceticism along with His Consort on the summit called Himavatprabhava in the northern wing of the celebrated mountain (Himalaya). (26) In this way have I told you, O Rāma, a detailed account of Goddess Umā (Daughter of Himavān). (Now) hear from me along with Lakṣmaṇa the story of the origin of the Ganga too. (27)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-six in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

---

* The demon Naraka, the son born of the union of Mother Earth with Her Consort, Lord Viṣṇu, manifested as the divine Boar, was later on killed by the same Lord in the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

सप्तत्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXVII

A detailed account of Kārtikeya's birth through Ganga

तप्यमाने तदा देवे सेन्द्राः साग्निपुरोगमाः । सेनापतिमभीप्सन्तः पितामहमुपागमन् ॥ १ ॥
ततोऽब्रुवन् सुराः सर्वे भगवन्तं पितामहम् । प्रणिपत्य सुरा राम सेन्द्राः साग्निपुरोगमाः ॥ २ ॥
येन सेनापतिर्देव दत्तो भगवता पुरा । स तपः परमास्थाय तप्यते स्म सहोमया ॥ ३ ॥
यदत्रानन्तरं कार्यं लोकानां हितकाम्यया । संविधत्स्व विधानज्ञ त्वं हि नः परमा गतिः ॥ ४ ॥
देवतानां वचः श्रुत्वा सर्वलोकपितामहः । सान्त्वयन् मधुरैर्वाक्यैस्त्रिदशानिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ५ ॥

"At that time, while the divinity (Lord Śiva) was (busy) practising austerities (along with His Consort, Goddess Umā), the gods along with Indra (their ruler) and accompanied by the god of fire as their leader approached Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation), seeking to secure a commander for their forces. (1) Falling prostrate before him, all the gods including Indra and accompanied by the god of fire as their leader thereupon addressed the venerable Brahmā (as follows), O Rāma (the delighter of gods):—(2) 'Resorting to supreme asceticism, the almighty Lord (Śiva), O glorious one, by whom a commander for our forces was vouchsafed (in the form of seed) some time back is practising austerities along with Goddess Umā (His Consort). (3) (Pray) accomplish what should be done next in this connection with the intention of doing good to the worlds, O knower of expedients, since you are our supreme resort.' (4) Hearing the submission of the gods, Brahmā (the progenitor of the whole universe) addressed the following words to the gods, comforting them with sweet assurances. (5)

शैलपुत्र्या यदुक्तं तन्न प्रजाः स्वासु पत्निषु । तस्या वचनमक्लिष्टं सत्यमेव न संशयः ॥ ६ ॥
इयमाकाशगङ्गा च यस्यां पुत्रं हुताशनः । जनयिष्यति देवानां सेनापतिमरिंदमम् ॥ ७ ॥
ज्येष्ठा शैलेन्द्रदुहिता मानयिष्यति तं सुतम् । उमायास्तद्बहुमतं भविष्यति न संशयः ॥ ८ ॥
तच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य कृतार्था रघुनन्दन । प्रणिपत्य सुराः सर्वे पितामहमपूजयन् ॥ ९ ॥
ते गत्वा परमं राम कैलासं धातुमण्डितम् । अग्निं नियोजयामासुः पुत्रार्थं सर्वदेवताः ॥१०॥
देवकार्यमिदं देव समाधत्स्व हुताशन । शैलपुत्र्यां महातेजो गङ्गायां तेज उत्सृज ॥११॥
देवतानां प्रतिज्ञाय गङ्गामभ्येत्य पावकः । गर्भं धारय वै देवि देवतानामिदं प्रियम् ॥१२॥
इत्येतद् वचनं श्रुत्वा दिव्यं रूपमधारयत् । स तस्या महिमां दृष्ट्वा समन्तादवशीर्यत ॥१३॥
समन्ततस्तदा देवीमभ्यषिञ्चत पावकः । सर्वस्रोतांसि पूर्णानि गङ्गाया रघुनन्दन ॥१४॥

'What has been uttered by Goddess Pārvatī (the daughter of Himavāṇ), *viz*, that you will have no progeny through your wives must be true: there is no doubt about it; (for) Her imprecation is unobstructed. (6) Here is the heavenly Ganga, through whom the god of fire will (by placing in her the seed of Lord Śiva) cause to be born a son capable of subduing his enemies, who will turn out to be the commander of the celestial armies. (7) Ganga (the elder daughter of the king of mountains) will account him as her (own) son and that (belief of hers) will be made much of (even) by Umā (her younger sister): there is no doubt about it.' (8) Satisfied to hear the above reply of Brahmā and falling prostrate before him, O scion of Raghu, all the gods venerated him. (9) Reaching the most excellent Kailāsa, rich in minerals, O Rāma, all the divinities urged the god of fire to produce a son (fit to command the celestial armies). (10) (They said to him,) 'Accomplish this object of gods, O exceptionally glorious god of fire ! Place in Ganga, the daughter of Himavān, the seed (of Lord Śiva borne by you).' (11) Making a promise to the gods (to accomplish their aforesaid purpose) and, approaching the (heavenly) Ganga, the god of fire prayed to her (as follows):—'(Pray) place (in yourself) the seed (of Lord Śiva, captured and retained by me); for such is the pleasure of gods.' (12) Hearing the aforesaid request (of the god of fire) the celestial river assumed an ethereal living form. Beholding her exquisiteness of form the seed (of Lord Śiva) melted on all sides. (13) The god of fire then impregnated her on all sides in such a way that all her veins were saturated (with the seed), O scion of Raghu ! (14)

तमुवाच ततो गङ्गा सर्वदेवपुरोगमम् । अशक्ता धारणे देव तेजस्तव समुद्धतम् ॥१५॥
दह्यमानाग्निना तेन सम्प्रव्यथितचेतना । अथाब्रवीदिदं गङ्गां सर्वदेवहुताशनः ॥१६॥
इह हैमवते पार्श्वे गर्भोऽयं संनिवेश्यताम् । श्रुत्वा त्वग्निवचो गङ्गा तं गर्भमतिभास्वरम् ॥१७॥
उत्ससर्ज महातेजाः स्रोतोभ्यो हि तदानघ । यदस्या निर्गतं तस्मात् तप्तजाम्बूनदप्रभम् ॥१८॥
काञ्चनं धरणीं प्राप्तं हिरण्यमतुलप्रभम् । ताम्रं कार्ष्णायसं चैव तैक्ष्ण्यादेवाभिजायत ॥१९॥
मलं तस्याभवत् तत्र त्रपु सीसकमेव च । तदेतद् धरणीं प्राप्य नानाधातुरवर्धत ॥२०॥
निक्षिप्तमात्रे गर्भे तु तेजोभिरभिरञ्जितम् । सर्वं पर्वतसंनद्धं सौवर्णमभवद् वनम् ॥२१॥
जातरूपमिति ख्यातं तदाप्रभृति राघव । सुवर्णं पुरुषव्याघ्र हुताशनसमप्रभम् ॥२२॥

"Burning with that fiery seed and with her mind extremely agonized, Ganga thereupon spoke (as follows) to the celebrated god of fire (the leader of all the gods):—'I am unable, O shining one, to bear the seed (of Lord Śiva) intensified by thine own.' The god of fire (who consumes the offerings intended for all gods) made the following reply to Ganga:— (15-16) 'This seed may (kindly) be discharged on this offshoot of the Himalayas.' Hearing the (aforesaid) suggestion of the god of fire, the exceptionally glorious Ganga for her part expelled from her veins that very moment that most resplendent seed, O sinless Rāma ! Since it emerged from the body of Ganga (a grand-daughter of Sumeru, a mountain of gold) it shone accordingly as molten gold of the purest type. (17-18) Its residue that fell on earth turned into gold and silver of matchless splendour. Due to the very severity of its heat even distant areas were converted into copper and iron. (19) Its dross turned into tin and lead on the earth. In this way on reaching the earth the seed (of Lord Śiva) grew to be various metals. (20) The moment the seed was deposited (on earth) really speaking the entire thicket (of white reeds referred to in verse 18 of Canto XXXVI above) along with the (white) mountain was irradiated with its splendour and turned into gold. (21) From that time onward, O scion of Raghu, gold, which shines like fire, came to be known as Jātarūpa (because it was at that time that its splendid form was brought to light), O tiger among men ! (22)

तं कुमारं ततो जातं सेन्द्राः सहमरुद्गणाः । क्षीरसम्भावनार्थाय कृत्तिकाः समयोजयन् ॥२३॥
ताः क्षीरं जातमात्रस्य कृत्वा समयमुत्तमम् । ददुः पुत्रोऽयमस्माकं सर्वासामिति निश्चिताः ॥२४॥
ततस्तु देवताः सर्वाः कार्तिकेय इति ब्रुवन् । पुत्रस्त्रैलोक्यविख्यातो भविष्यति न संशयः ॥२५॥
तेषां तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा स्कन्नं गर्भपरिस्रवे । स्नापयन् परया लक्ष्म्या दीप्यमानं यथानलम् ॥२६॥
स्कन्द इत्यब्रुवन् देवाः स्कन्नं गर्भपरिस्रये । कार्तिकेयं महाबाहुं काकुत्स्थ ज्वलनोपमम् ॥२७॥
प्रादुर्भूतं ततः क्षीरं कृत्तिकानामनुत्तमम् । षण्णां षडाननो भूत्वा जग्राह स्तनजं पयः ॥२८॥
गृहीत्वा क्षीरमेकाह्ना सुकुमारवपुस्तदा । अजयत् स्वेन वीर्येण दैत्यसैन्यगणान् विभुः ॥२९॥
सुरसेनागणपतिमभ्यषिञ्चन् महाद्युतिम् । ततस्तममराः सर्वे समेत्याग्निपुरोगमाः ॥३०॥

"Thereupon the hosts of gods along with Indra (their ruler) brought together the boy thus born as well as the Kṛttikās (the female deities presiding over the group of six stars forming the constellation of that name) in a body for the purpose of suckling the babe. (23) Having arrived at a sublime understanding that the babe in question would be the son of them all and determined accordingly, they (synchronously) suckled the boy as soon as he was born. (24) Thereupon all the gods said, 'The boy will be celebrated in all the three worlds (heaven, earth and the space intervening them) as a son of the Kṛttikās: there is no doubt about it.' (25) Hearing the aforesaid utterance of the gods (which was so agreeable to them), the Kṛttikās bathed the babe that had (first) trickled down (in the form of seed from the body of Lord Śiva) and (again) on its oozing from the womb (of Ganga) shone with supreme effulgence like fire. (26) The gods named the mighty-armed son of the Kṛttikās, who was effulgent as fire, O scion of Kakutstha, as Skanda (from the root 'Skand'—to flow) because he had slipped from the womb (of Ganga). (27) Then there appeared milk, excelled by no other milk, in the breasts of the Kṛttikās, and growing six-faced, the babe sucked the milk flowing from the breasts of (all) the six (together). (28) Having sucked their milk (only) for a day the boy, though tender of body, grew so powerful (even) then that he (gradually) conquered by (sheer) dint of his might (several) divisions of the demon army. (29) Meeting together all the gods, headed by the god of fire, then installed (with due ceremony) that exceptionally glorious boy as the commander of the celestial forces. (30)

एष ते राम गङ्गायां विस्तरोऽभिहितो मया । कुमारसम्भवश्चैव धन्यः पुण्यस्तथैव च ॥३१॥
भक्तश्च यः कार्तिकेये काकुत्स्थ भुवि मानवः । आयुष्मान् पुत्रपौत्रैश्च स्कन्दसालोक्यतां व्रजेत् ॥३२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे सप्तत्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३७ ॥

"In this way has been told by me, O Rāma, a detailed narrative of the Ganga as also the story of the advent of Kumāra (son of Lord Śiva), which confers wealth as well as religious merit (on the hearer as well as on the reader). (31) Nay, a man on earth who is devoted to Kārtikeya, O scion of Kakutstha, bids fair to attain longevity and an abode in the (divine) realm of Skanda along with his sons and grandsons." (32)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-seven in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टात्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXVIII

The narrative of King Sagara, a former king of Ayodhya and a forefather of Śrī Rāma

तां कथां कौशिको रामे निवेद्य मधुराक्षराम् । पुनरेवापरं वाक्यं काकुत्स्थमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
अयोध्याधिपतिर्वीर पूर्वमासीन्नराधिपः । सगरो नाम धर्मात्मा प्रजाकामः स चाप्रजः ॥ २ ॥
वैदर्भदुहिता राम केशिनी नाम नामतः । ज्येष्ठा सगरपत्नी सा धर्मिष्ठा सत्यवादिनी ॥ ३ ॥
अरिष्टनेमेर्दुहिता सुपर्णभगिनी तु सा । द्वितीया सगरस्यासीत् पत्नी सुमतिसंज्ञिता ॥ ४ ॥
ताभ्यां सह महाराजः पत्नीभ्यां तप्तवांस्तपः । हिमवन्तं समासाद्य भृगुप्रस्रवणे गिरौ ॥ ५ ॥
अथ वर्षशते पूर्णे तपसाऽऽराधितो मुनिः । सगराय वरं प्रादाद् भृगुः सत्यवतां वरः ॥ ६ ॥
अपत्यलाभः सुमहान् भविष्यति तवानघ । कीर्तिं चाप्रतिमां लोके प्राप्स्यसे पुरुषर्षभ ॥ ७ ॥
एका जनयिता तात पुत्रं वंशकरं तव । षष्टिं पुत्रसहस्राणि अपरा जनयिष्यति ॥ ८ ॥

Having narrated to Śrī Rāma in sweet accents the aforesaid story, Viśwāmitra (a scion of Kuśa) further related the following other narrative to the scion of Kakutstha. (1) In the days of old, O heroic Rāma, there was a king, Sagara by name, who ruled over Ayodhya, and whose mind was given to piety. And being issueless he longed for progeny. (2) A daughter of the king of Vidarbha, known by the name of Keśinī, O Rāma, was the eldest wife of Sagara. She was extremely pious and truthful. (3) The second wife of Sagara was named as Sumati. She was really speaking a daughter of the sage Ariṣṭanemi (nicknamed Kaśyapa) and a sister of Suparṇa (another name of Garuḍa, the king of birds and the carrier of Lord Viṣṇu). (4) Having reached the Himalaya mountain, the great king practised asceticism on an offshoot of the Himalayas, Bhṛgu-Prasravaṇa (by name) along with his aforesaid two wives. (5) Propitiated by his askesis, the sage Bhṛgu (a mind-born son of Brahmā), the foremost of the votaries of truth, conferred a boon on Sagara when a hundred years had been completed. (6) (He said,) "good many sons will be born to you, O sinless one, and you will attain unequalled fame in the world, O jewel among men! (7) One wife of yours will bear you a son that will perpetuate your race, O dear one; while the other will give birth to sixty thousand sons." (8)

भाषमाणं नरव्याघ्रं राजपुत्र्यौ प्रसाद्य तम् । ऊचतुः परमप्रीते कृताञ्जलिपुटे तदा ॥ ९ ॥
एकः कस्याः सुतो ब्रह्मन् का बहूञ्जनयिष्यति । श्रोतुमिच्छावहे ब्रह्मन् सत्यमस्तु वचस्तव ॥१०॥
तयोस्तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा भृगुः परमधार्मिकः । उवाच परमां वाणीं स्वच्छन्दोऽत्र विधीयताम् ॥११॥
एको वंशकरो वास्तु बहवो वा महाबलाः । कीर्तिमन्तो महोत्साहाः का वा कं वरमिच्छति ॥१२॥
मुनेस्तु वचनं श्रुत्वा केशिनी रघुनन्दन । पुत्रं वंशकरं राम जग्राह नृपसंनिधौ ॥१३॥
षष्टिं पुत्रसहस्राणि सुपर्णभगिनी तदा । महोत्साहान् कीर्तिमतो जग्राह सुमतिः सुतान् ॥१४॥
प्रदक्षिणमृषिं कृत्वा शिरसाभिप्रणम्य तम् । जगाम स्वपुरं राजा सभार्यो रघुनन्दन ॥१५॥

Propitiating that tiger among men (the sage Bhṛgu), while he was speaking (as aforesaid), the two princesses (the daughters of the king of Vidarbha and the sage Kaśyapa, a king of sages, respectively), who were supremely delighted (to hear of the boon granted by him), submitted on that occasion with joined palms (as follows):—(9) "We wish to hear by which (of us) will be borne a single son and which, O holy one, will give birth to many. Let your prediction be true, O sage !" (10) Hearing that question of theirs, the supremely pious Bhṛgu gave the following excellent reply:—"Let your (own) will be enforced in this matter. (11) In one case there will be a single son that will perpetuate the race and in the other many mighty and renowned sons full of great daring. Which (of you) would have which boon ?" (12) Hearing the sage's reply, Keśinī (the senior queen), for her part, O scion of Raghu, preferred in the presence of the king a son that would perpetuate the line, O Rāma. (13) Thereupon Sumati, Garuḍa's sister, sought sixty thousand renowned sons full of great daring. (14) Going round the sage clockwise and saluting him with his head bent low, the king returned to his capital with his wives, O Rāma ! (15)

अथ काले गते तस्य ज्येष्ठा पुत्रं व्यजायत । असमञ्ज इति ख्यातं केशिनी सगरात्मजम् ॥१६॥
सुमतिस्तु नरव्याघ्र गर्भतुम्बं व्यजायत । षष्टिः पुत्रसहस्राणि तुम्बभेदाद् विनिस्सृताः ॥१७॥
घृतपूर्णेषु कुम्भेषु घात्र्यस्तान् समवर्धयन् । कालेन महता सर्वे यौवनं प्रतिपेदिरे ॥१८॥
अथ दीर्घेण कालेन रूपयौवनशालिनः । षष्टिः पुत्रसहस्राणि सगरस्याभवंस्तदा ॥१९॥
स च ज्येष्ठो नरश्रेष्ठ सगरस्यात्मसम्भवः । बालान् गृहीत्वा तु जले सरय्वा रघुनन्दन ॥२०॥
प्रक्षिप्य प्राहसन्नित्यं मज्जतस्तान् निरीक्ष्य वै । एवं पापसमाचारः सज्जनप्रतिबाधकः ॥२१॥
पौराणामहिते युक्तः पित्रा निर्वासितः पुरात् । तस्य पुत्रोंऽशुमान्नाम असमञ्जस्य वीर्यवान् ॥२२॥
सम्मतः सर्वलोकस्य सर्वस्यापि प्रियंवदः ।

Now, when the time was ripe, the senior queen, Keśinī, bore Sagara a son, known by the name of Asamañja, sprung from his loins. (16) Sumati, on the other hand, O tiger among men, brought forth a foetus shaped like a bitter gourd. On the gourd being split up sixty thousand male issues emerged from it. (17) The nurses nurtured them placing them in jars full of ghee. After a considerable period of time all attained maturity. (18) then after a long time sixty thousand sons endowed with comeliness and youthful vigour now stood by the side of King Sagara. (19) The aforesaid eldest son of Sagara, however, O jewel among men, actually caught hold of infants, O scion of Raghu, every day and, throwing them into the waters of the Sarayu, openly and heartliy laughed to see them drowning. Thus given to sinful conduct and tormenting pious men and intent on doing harm to the citizens, the youth was exiled by his father from the capital. The valiant son of the aforesaid Asamañja, Aṃśumān by name, (on the other hand) was beloved of all people and spoke kindly to all.

ततः कालेन महता मतिः समभिजायत ॥२३॥
सगरस्य नरश्रेष्ठ यजेयमिति निश्चिता ।
स कृत्वा निश्चयं राजा सोपाध्यायगणस्तदा । यज्ञकर्मणि वेदज्ञो यष्टुं समुपचक्रमे ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डेऽष्टात्रिंशः सर्गः ३८ ॥

Then after a considerable period of time a firm resolve was made by Sagara that he should perform a sacrifice, O jewel among men! Having resolved upon a sacrificial performance, the aforesaid king, who was well-versed in the Vedas, made ready that (very) moment to undertake a sacrifice along with the help of his family priests. (20—24)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-eight in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकोनचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXIX

Indra steals away the horse released by Sagara as a prelude to his horse-sacrifice; his sixty thousand sons proceed to excavate the earth in quest of the horse and the gods in terror apprise Brahmā of this daring of theirs.

विश्वामित्रवचः श्रुत्वा कथान्ते रघुनन्दनः । उवाच परमप्रीतो मुनिं दीप्तमिवानलम् ॥ १ ॥
श्रोतुमिच्छामि भद्रं ते विस्तरेण कथामिमाम् । पूर्वजो मे कथं ब्रह्मन् यज्ञं वै समुपाहरत् ॥ २ ॥
तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा कौतूहलसमन्वितः । विश्वामित्रस्तु काकुत्स्थमुवाच प्रहसन्निव ॥ ३ ॥
श्रूयतां विस्तरो राम सगरस्य महात्मनः । शंकरश्वशुरो नाम्ना हिमवानिति विश्रुतः ॥ ४ ॥
विन्ध्यपर्वतमासाद्य निरीक्षेते परस्परम् । तयोर्मध्ये समभवद् यज्ञः स पुरुषोत्तम ॥ ५ ॥
स हि देशो नरव्याघ्र प्रशस्तो यज्ञकर्मणि । तस्याश्वचर्यां काकुत्स्थ दृढधन्वा महारथः ॥ ६ ॥
अंशुमानकरोत् तात सगरस्य मते स्थितः ।

Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) felt supremely delighted to hear the speech of Viśwāmitra. At the end of the discourse he spoke (as follows), to the sage who shone as fire:—(1) "May God bless you, I wish to hear this story at length. How did my forefather (King Sagara) perform the sacrifice, O holy one?" (2) Seized with wonder to hear that question of Śrī Rāma, Viśwāmitra for his part replied to the scion of Kakutstha (as follows) as though laughing heartily:—(3) Hear, O Rāma, a detailed account of (the sacrificial performance of) the high-souled Sagara. The father-in-law of Lord Śankara, widely known by the name of Himavān, and the Vindhya mountain gaze on one another, Himavān overlooking Vindhya and *vice versa*. The aforesaid sacrifice took place in the region lying between the two ranges, O chief of men! (4–5) That land,* O tiger among men, is really commended for a sacrificial performance. Remaining at Sagara's beck and call, O dear Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), Aṃśumān, a great car-warrior, who was armed with a strong bow* played the role of attending the sacrificial horse (during its wanderings as its guard).

---

* The region intervening the Vindhyan and Himalayan ranges has been designated as Āryāvarta and declared in the Śāstras as sacred—

आर्यावर्तः पुण्यभूमिर्मध्यं हिमवद्विन्ध्ययोः ।

तस्य पर्वणि तं यज्ञं यजमानस्य वासवः ॥ ७ ॥
राक्षसीं तनुमास्थाय यज्ञियाश्वमपाहरत् । ह्रियमाणे तु काकुत्स्थ तस्मिन्नश्वे महात्मनः ॥ ८ ॥
उपाध्यायगणाः सर्वे यजमानमथाब्रुवन् । अयं पर्वणि वेगेन यज्ञियाश्वोऽपनीयते ॥ ९ ॥
हर्तारं जहि काकुत्स्थ हयश्चैवोपनीयताम् । यज्ञच्छिद्रं भवत्येतत् सर्वेषामशिवाय नः ॥१०॥
तत् तथा क्रियतां राजन् यज्ञोऽच्छिद्रः कृतो भवेत् । सोपाध्यायवचः श्रुत्वा तस्मिन् सदसि पार्थिवः ॥११॥
षष्टिं पुत्रसहस्राणि वाक्यमेतदुवाच ह । गतिं पुत्रा न पश्यामि रक्षसां पुरुषर्षभाः ॥१२॥
मन्त्रपूतैर्महाभागैरास्थितो हि महाक्रतुः । तद् गच्छथ विचिन्वध्वं पुत्रका भद्रमस्तु वः ॥१३॥
समुद्रमालिनीं सर्वां पृथिवीमनुगच्छथ । एकैकं योजनं पुत्रा विस्तारमभिगच्छत ॥१४॥
यावत् तुरगसंदर्शस्तावत् खनत मेदिनीम् । तमेव हयहर्तारं मार्गमाणा ममाज्ञया ॥१५॥
दीक्षितः पौत्रसहितः सोपाध्यायगणस्त्वहम् । इह स्थास्यामि भद्रं वो यावत् तुरगदर्शनम् ॥१६॥

Assuming the semblance of an ogre Indra stole away the sacrificial horse of Sagara, while he was (busy) performing the said sacrifice on the day of Ukthya (a liturgical ceremony). While the aforesaid horse of the high-souled Sagara was actually being taken away, all the priests officiating at the sacrifice forthwith addressed the sacrificer (as follows):—"On the day of Ukthya the sacrificial horse is being taken away with vehemence over there. Kill the thief, O scion of Kakutstha, and let the horse be recovered. This obstruction in the sacrificial performance is calculated to bring ill luck to us all. (6—10) Therefore it may be so arranged, O king, that the sacrificial performance is cleared of this impediment." Hearing the report of the priests including the family priest (gathered) in that assembly the king addressed the following words to his sixty thousand sons: so the tradition goes:—"I do not perceive, my sons, even the access of ogres (to this sacrificial performance), O jewels among men, since this great sacrifice is presided over by highly blessed souls consecrated by (the recitation of) holy texts. Therefore, go and track out the thief, my beloved sons; may prosperity attend you (all). (11—13) Ransack the entire globe encircled by the oceans. Apportion to yourselves, my sons, land with an area of one square Yojana (64 sq. miles) each and scour it. (14) (If, however, you fail to trace him on the earth's surface) excavate the earth under my order, looking about for the very individual who has stolen away the horse, till the horse is found. (15) I for my part, who stand consecrated, will tarry here along with my grandson (Aṃśumān) and the priests officiating at the sacrifice till the horse is in sight; may good betide you." (16)

ते सर्वे हृष्टमनसो राजपुत्रा महाबलाः । जग्मुर्महीतलं राम पितुर्वचनयन्त्रिताः ॥१७॥
गत्वा तु पृथिवीं सर्वामदृष्ट्वा तं महाबलाः ।
योजनायामविस्तारमेकैको धरणीतलम् । बिभिदुः पुरुषव्याघ्रा वज्रस्पर्शसमैर्भुजैः ॥१८॥
शूलैरशनिकल्पैश्च हलैश्चापि सुदारुणैः । भिद्यमाना वसुमती ननाद रघुनन्दन ॥१९॥
नागानां वध्यमानानामसुराणां च राघव । राक्षसानां दुराधर्षः सत्त्वानां निनदोऽभवत् ॥२०॥
योजनानां सहस्राणि षष्टिं तु रघुनन्दन । बिभिदुर्धरणीं राम रसातलमनुत्तमम् ॥२१॥
एवं पर्वतसम्बाधं जम्बूद्वीपं नृपात्मजाः । खनन्तो नृपशार्दूल सर्वतः परिचक्रमुः ॥२२॥

Bound by the words of their father all those very mighty princes traversed the earth's surface with a delighted mind, O Rāma! (17) Traversing the whole earth and yet not finding the horse, the very mighty princes, who were tigers among men, started excavating the earth with their arms whose impact was as hard as that of a thunderbolt, each digging land covering an area of one square Yojana or sixty-four square miles. (18) The earth groaned (even) as it was being dug with pikes hard as adamant as well as with most farmidable ploughshares, O scion of Raghu ! (19) There was a loud roar, that could not be easily repressed, of Nāgas, demons, ogres and other living beings (inhabiting the subterranean regions) that were being killed (in the course of the excavation). (20) They excavated, O scion of Raghu, land covering an area of sixty thousand square Yojanas as if to reach Rasātala (the sixth or penultimate subterranean sphere), a region excelled by no other sphere (in point of beauty, splendour and amenities of life), O Rāma ! (21) In this way, O tiger among princes, the (sixty thousand sons of Sagara went about excavating in all directions (the land of) Jambūdwīpa, thick with mountains. (22)

ततो देवाः सगन्धर्वाः सासुराः सहपन्नगाः । सम्भ्रान्तमनसः सर्वे पितामहमुपागमन् ॥२३॥
ते प्रसाद्य महात्मानं विषण्णवदनास्तदा । ऊचुः परमसंत्रस्ताः पितामहमिदं वचः ॥२४॥
भगवन् पृथिवी सर्वा खन्यते सगरात्मजैः । बहवश्च महात्मानो वध्यन्ते जलचारिणः ॥२५॥
अयं यज्ञहनोऽस्माकमनेनाश्वोऽपनीयते । इति ते सर्वभूतानि हिंसन्ति सगरात्मजाः ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकोनचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३९ ॥

Agitated in mind, gods including Gandharvas, demons and Nāgas, all sought the presence of Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation). (23) Glorifying the high-souled Brahmā on that occasion, they made the following submission to him with a doleful face, greatly alarmed as they were :— (24) "O Lord, the entire globle is being excavated and many exalted souls and aquatic animals killed (in the process) by the sons of Sagara. (25) The aforesaid sons of Sagara are destroying all created beings suspecting that whosoever comes before them has interfered with their sacrificial performance and that the (sacrificial) horse has been taken away by him." (26)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-nine in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XL

Brahmā reassures the gods by telling them that the sons of Sagara
will be destroyed by the curse of Sage Kapila. The sons of
Sagara in the course of their excavation arrive in the
presence of Kapila and, behaving insolently
towards him, are forthwith reduced to
ashes by the fire of his wrath.

देवतानां वचः श्रुत्वा भगवान् वै पितामहः । प्रत्युवाच सुसंत्रस्तान् कृतान्तबलमोहितान् ॥ १ ॥
यस्येयं वसुधा कृत्स्ना वासुदेवस्य धीमतः । महिषी माधवस्यैषा स एव भगवान् प्रभुः ॥ २ ॥
कापिलं रूपमास्थाय धारयत्यनिशं धराम् । तस्य कोपाग्निना दग्धा भविष्यन्ति नृपात्मजाः ॥ ३ ॥

पृथिव्याश्चापि निर्भेदो दृष्ट एव सतानतः । सगरस्य च पुत्राणां विनाशो दीर्घदर्शिनाम् ॥ ४ ॥
पितामहवचः श्रुत्वा त्रयस्त्रिंशदरिंदमाः । देवाः परमसंहृष्टाः पुनर्जग्मुर्यथागतम् ॥ ५ ॥
सगरस्य च पुत्राणां प्रादुरासीन्महास्वनः । पृथिव्यां भिद्यमानायां निर्घातसमनिःस्वनः ॥ ६ ॥
ततो भित्त्वा महीं सर्वां कृत्वा चापि प्रदक्षिणम् । सहिताः सागराः सर्वे पितरं वाक्यमब्रुवन् ॥ ७ ॥
परिक्रान्ता मही सर्वा सत्त्ववन्तश्च सूदिताः । देवदानवरक्षांसि पिशाचोरगपन्नगाः ॥ ८ ॥
न च पश्यामहेऽश्वं ते अश्वहर्तारमेव च । किं करिष्याम भद्रं ते बुद्धिरत्र विचार्यताम् ॥ ९ ॥
तेषां तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा पुत्राणां राजसत्तमः । समन्युरब्रवीद् वाक्यं सगरो रघुनन्दन ॥१०॥
भूयः खनत भद्रं वो विभेद्य वसुधातलम् । अश्वहर्तारमासाद्य कृतार्थाश्च निवर्तत ॥११॥
पितुर्वचनमासाद्य सगरस्य महात्मनः । षष्टिः पुत्रसहस्राणि रसातलमभिद्रवन् ॥१२॥

Hearing the representation of the gods the venerable Brahmā replied (as follows) to the gods, who were greatly alarmed, and had been thrown into confusion by the might of the sons of Sagara (who had brought about the destruction of living beings on a large scale) :— (1) "This Goddess Earth is a Consort of the all-wise Lord Viṣṇu, the Spouse of Lakṣmī (the goddess of fortune), to whom this entire globe belongs. Assuming the form of Kapila the same almighty Lord incessantly supports the earth (by dint of His yogic power). The sons of Sagara will be (shortly) consumed by the fire of His wrath. (2–3) The excavation of the earth invariably takes place (in every Kalpa). And the destruction of the sons of Sagara too is foreseen by men possessing a long range of vision. (Hence there is no occasion for grief on this account either)." (4) Hearing the reply of Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation), the gods, thirty-three* in number, (all) capable of subduing their enemy, returned extremely delighted (to their respective abode) the way they had come. (5) And while the earth was being excavated at the hands of Sagara's sons there arose a terrific sound like that of a thunderstorm. (6) Having walked round the whole earth and excavated it too, all the sons of Sagara then sought (the presence of) their father and jointly made the following submission to him :—(7) "The entire globe has been circumambulated (and excavated) and powerful gods, demons and ogres, fiends, serpents and Nāgas destroyed (by us). (8) Yet we have neither been able to trace your horse nor the stealer of the horse. What shall we do (now) ? May your benign look descend on us and let a (further) plan (of action) be thought out for us in this matter." (9) Hearing the aforesaid submission of those princes, O scion of Raghu, Sagara, the noblest of kings, angrily replied as follows :—(10) "May prosperity attend you, excavate the earth further and, breaking it open, trace the stealer of the horse and return (only) when you have accomplished your purpose." (11) Bowing to the command of their high-souled father, Sagara, the sixty thousand princes dug their way into Rasātala. (12)

खन्यमाने ततस्तस्मिन् ददृशुः पर्वतोपमम् । दिशागजं विरूपाक्षं धारयन्तं महीतलम् ॥१३॥
सपर्वतवनां कृत्स्नां पृथिवीं रघुनन्दन । धारयामास शिरसा विरूपाक्षो महागजः ॥१४॥
यदा पर्वणि काकुत्स्थ विश्रमार्थं महागजः । खेदाच्चालयते शीर्षं भूमिकम्पस्तदा भवेत् ॥१५॥
ते तं प्रदक्षिणं कृत्वा दिशापालं महागजम् । मानयन्तो हि ते राम जग्मुर्भित्त्वा रसातलम् ॥१६॥
ततः पूर्वां दिशं भित्त्वा दक्षिणां बिभिदुः पुनः । दक्षिणस्यामपि दिशि ददृशुस्ते महागजम् ॥१७॥

---

* The thirty-three principal gods are the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras, the twelve Ādityas and the two Aświnikumāras (the twin-born physicians of gods).

महापद्मं महात्मानं सुमहत्पर्वतोपमम् । शिरसा धारयन्तं गां विस्मयं जग्मुरुत्तमम् ॥१८॥
ते तं प्रदक्षिणं कृत्वा सगरस्य महात्मनः । षष्टिः पुत्रसहस्राणि पश्चिमां बिभिदुर्दिशम् ॥१९॥
पश्चिमायामपि दिशि महान्तमचलोपमम् । दिशागजं सौमनसं ददृशुस्ते महाबलाः ॥२०॥
ते तं प्रदक्षिणं कृत्वा पृष्ट्वा चापि निरामयम् । खनन्तः समुपाक्रान्ता दिशं सोमवतीं तदा ॥२१॥
उत्तरस्यां रघुश्रेष्ठ ददृशुर्हिमपाण्डुरम् । भद्रं भद्रेण वपुषा धारयन्तं महीमिमाम् ॥२२॥
समालभ्य ततः सर्वे कृत्वा चैनं प्रदक्षिणम् । षष्टिः पुत्रसहस्राणि बिभिदुर्वसुधातलम् ॥२३॥

(Even) while the earth was being (further) tunnelled, they saw as a sequel to that excavation an elephant huge as a mountain, Virūpākṣa (by name), guarding the (eastern) quarter and supporting the globe. (13) The great elephant Virūpākṣa, O scion of Raghu, supported on his head the entire globe including the mountains and forests. (14) Whenever, from exhaustion, O scion of Kakutstha, the great elephant shakes his head for the sake of relief a convulsion of the earth's surface ensues. (15) Walking clockwise round that great elephant guarding the quarter, and thereby showing their respect to him, O Rāma, they tunnelled their way through Rasātala indeed. (16) Having pierced the eastern quarter they then penetrated the southern quarter too, and in the southern quarter again they found the great elephant Mahāpadma, endowed with a colossal body resembling a huge mountain and supporting the earth on his head, and experienced great wonder. (17-18) Walking round the elephant from left to right (as a mark of respect), the sixty thousand sons of the high-souled Sagara penetrated the western quarter. (19) In the western quarter too those very mighty princes beheld the great elephant guarding that quarter, Saumanasa (by name), that resembled a mountain (in size). (20) Walking round the elephant clockwise and enquiring after his welfare, they then dug their way into the northern quarter (presided over by the moon-god). (21) In the north, O chief of the Raghus, they saw Bhadra (the elephant guarding that quarter), white as snow, supporting this globe on his beautiful body. (22) Touching the elephant and walking round him from left to right, all the sixty thousand princes set about digging the earth (once more). (23)

ततः प्रागुत्तरां गत्वा सागराः प्रथितां दिशम् । रोषादभ्यखनन् सर्वे पृथिवीं सगरात्मजाः ॥२४॥
ते तु सर्वे महात्मानो भीमवेगा महाबलाः । ददृशुः कपिलं तत्र वासुदेवं सनातनम् ॥२५॥
हयं च तस्य देवस्य चरन्तमविदूरतः । प्रहर्षमतुलं प्राप्ताः सर्वे ते रघुनन्दन ॥२६॥
ते तं यज्ञहनं ज्ञात्वा क्रोधपर्याकुलेक्षणाः । खनित्रलाङ्गलधरा नानावृक्षशिलाधराः ॥२७॥
अभ्यधावन्त संक्रुद्धास्तिष्ठ तिष्ठेति चाब्रुवन् । अस्माकं त्वं हि तुरगं यज्ञियं हृतवानसि ॥२८॥
दुर्मेधस्त्वं हि सम्प्राप्तान् विद्धि नः सगरात्मजान् । श्रुत्वा तद् वचनं तेषां कपिलो रघुनन्दन ॥२९॥
रोषेण महताऽऽविष्टो हुंकारमकरोत् तदा ।
ततस्तेनाप्रमेयेण कपिलेन महात्मना । भस्मराशीकृताः सर्वे काकुत्स्थ सगरात्मजाः ॥३०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे चत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४० ॥

Proceeding in the celebrated north-easterly direction (presided over by Lord Śiva and as such held sacred for all holy undertakings), all the sons of Sagara continued digging the earth in an angry mood. (24) All those high-minded and very mighty princes, possessed of tremendous speed, actually beheld there the eternal Lord Viṣṇu manifested in the form of Sage Kapila, as well as a horse grazing not very far from that glorious sage, on which they all experienced incomparable joy, O scion of Raghu! (25-26) (Thoughtlessly) suspecting him to be the man who had interrupted the sacrificial performance (by stealing away the sacrificial horse), they felt enraged and rushed towards him with their eyes bedimmed through anger, carrying spades and ploughs and various kinds of trees and rocks, and said, "Stop! Stop!! You alone have stolen our sacrificial horse. (27-28) Indeed know you us to be the sons of Sagara arrived in a body, O evil-minded one!" Seized with fury to hear that threat of theirs, O scion of Raghu, Kapila forthwith uttered the sound 'hum' (expressive of contempt). The very next moment the sons of Sagara were all reduced to a heap of ashes by that high-souled Sage Kapila of immeasurable glory (29-30)

Thus ends Canto Forty in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLI

Under orders of Sagara his grandson Aṃśumān proceeds to Rasātala through the underground passage made by his uncles and, bringing back the sacrificial horse, tells the king about the fate of his uncles.

पुत्रांश्चिरगताञ्ज्ञात्वा सगरो रघुनन्दन । नप्तारमब्रवीद् राजा दीप्यमानं स्वतेजसा ॥ १ ॥
शूरश्च कृतविद्यश्च पूर्वैस्तुल्योऽसि तेजसा । पितॄणां गतिमन्विच्छ येन चाश्वोऽपवाहितः ॥ २ ॥
अन्तर्भौमानि सत्त्वानि वीर्यवन्ति महान्ति च । तेषां तु प्रतिघातार्थं सासिं गृह्णीष्व कार्मुकम् ॥ ३ ॥
अभिवाद्याभिवाद्यांस्त्वं हत्वा विघ्नकरानपि । सिद्धार्थः संनिवर्तस्व मम यज्ञस्य पारगः ॥ ४ ॥
एवमुक्तोऽंशुमान् सम्यक् सगरेण महात्मना । धनुरादाय खड्गं च जगाम लघुविक्रमः ॥ ५ ॥
स खातं पितृभिर्मार्गमन्तर्भौमं महात्मभिः । प्रापद्यत नरश्रेष्ठ तेन राज्ञाभिचोदितः ॥ ६ ॥
देवदानवरक्षोभिः पिशाचपतगोरगैः । पूज्यमानं महातेजा दिशागजमपश्यत ॥ ७ ॥

Perceiving that his sons had been away for a long time, O scion of Raghu, King Sagara spoke (as follows) to his grandson (Aṃśumān), resplendent with his own glory :—(1) 'You are valiant and learned and the compeer of your forbears in splendour. Trace the whereabouts of your uncles as well as of the man by whom the (sacrificial) horse has been stolen away. (2) The living beings inhabiting the subterranean regions are full of (great) prowess and gigantic (of body). In order to meet their assault, therefore, take up a bow along with a sword. (3) Bowing to those who deserve to be greeted and at the same time killing those who come in your way, return you (only) when you have accomplished your purpose, and (thus) ensure the completion of my sacrificial performance." (4) Duly instructed thus by the high-souled Sagara and taking his bow and sword, Aṃśumān departed with quick paces. (5) Urged by the aforesaid king, O jewel among men, he reached (in no time) the underground passage dug by his high-minded uncles. (6) The exceptionally glorious Aṃśumān (presently) saw an elephant guarding one of the four quarters, (that was) being worshipped by gods, demons and ogres, fiends, winged creatures and serpents. (7)

स तं प्रदक्षिणं कृत्वा पृष्ट्वा चैव निरामयम् । पितॄन् स परिपप्रच्छ वाजिहर्तारमेव च ॥ ८ ॥
दिशागजस्तु तच्छ्रुत्वा प्रत्युवाच महामतिः । आसमञ्ज कृतार्थस्त्वं सहाश्वः शीघ्रमेष्यसि ॥ ९ ॥
तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा सर्वानेव दिशागजान् । यथाक्रमं यथान्यायं प्रष्टुं समुपचक्रमे ॥१०॥
तैश्च सर्वैर्दिशापालैर्वाक्यज्ञैर्वाक्यकोविदैः । पूजितः सहयश्चैवागन्तासीत्यभिचोदितः ॥११॥
तेषां तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा जगाम लघुविक्रमः । भस्मराशीकृता यत्र पितरस्तस्य सागराः ॥१२॥
स दुःखवशमापन्नस्त्वसमञ्जसुतस्तदा । चुक्रोश परमार्तस्तु वधात् तेषां सुदुःखितः ॥१३॥
यज्ञियं च हयं तत्र चरन्तमविदूरतः । ददर्श पुरुषव्याघ्रो दुःखशोकसमन्वितः ॥१४॥
स तेषां राजपुत्राणां कर्तुकामो जलक्रियाम् । स जलार्थी महातेजा न चापश्यज्जलाशयम् ॥१५॥

Walking clockwise round the elephant and inquiring after his welfare, he questioned him about his uncles as well as about the stealer of the (sacrificial) horse (of his father). (8) Hearing his aforesaid question, the highly intelligent elephant presiding over the quarter, for his part, replied, "Accomplished of purpose, O son of Asamañja, you will soon come back along with the horse." (9) Hearing the aforesaid reply of the elephant, Aṃśumān proceeded to ask the same question of all the elephants guarding the quarters in their order of seniority and in a befitting manner. (10) He was received with honour by all the elephants guarding (all) the (four) quarters,—who could (easily) understand the meaning of others' speech and were (equally) adept in expression,—and told that he would return along with the horse. (11) Hearing that reply of theirs, Aṃśumān repaired with quick paces to the place where his uncles, the sons of Sagara, lay reduced to a heap of ashes. (12) Already fallen a prey to affliction (on not finding them), the said son of Asamañja for his part thereupon felt deeply distressed over their death and actually cried in great agony. (13) Nay, full of sorrow and grief the tiger among men also perceived the sacrificial horse grazing on the spot not very far from him. (14) He felt inclined to offer water to (the spirits of) those princes. Though desirous of water (for that purpose), that exceptionally glorious prince, however, did not come across any reservoir of water (near by). (15)

विसार्य निपुणां दृष्टिं ततोऽपश्यत् खगाधिपम् । पितॄणां मातुलं राम सुपर्णमनिलोपमम् ॥१६॥
स चैनमब्रवीद् वाक्यं वैनतेयो महाबलः । मा शुचः पुरुषव्याघ्र वधोऽयं लोकसम्मतः ॥१७॥
कपिलेनाप्रमेयेण दग्धा हीमे महाबलाः । सलिलं नार्हसि प्राज्ञ दातुमेषां हि लौकिकम् ॥१८॥
गङ्गा हिमवतो ज्येष्ठा दुहिता पुरुषर्षभ । तस्यां कुरु महाबाहो पितॄणां सलिलक्रियाम् ॥१९॥
भस्मराशीकृतानेतान् प्लावयेल्लोकपावनी ।
तया क्लिन्नमिदं भस्म गङ्गया लोककान्तया । षष्टिं पुत्रसहस्राणि स्वर्गलोकं गमिष्यति ॥२०॥
निर्गच्छाश्वं महाभाग संगृह्य पुरुषर्षभ । यज्ञं पैतामहं वीर निर्वर्तयितुमर्हसि ॥२१॥
सुपर्णवचनं श्रुत्वा सोंऽशुमानतिवीर्यवान् । त्वरितं हयमादाय पुनरायान्महातपाः ॥२२॥
ततो राजानमासाद्य दीक्षितं रघुनन्दन । न्यवेदयद् यथा वृत्तं सुपर्णवचनं तथा ॥२३॥

Extending his penetrating vision all round, O Rāma, he then saw Garuḍa, the king of birds and the maternal uncle of his uncles, who is swift as the wind. (16) The very mighty Garuḍa (son of Vinatā), however, addressed to him the (following) admonition :—"This death (of your uncles), O tiger among men, is conducive to the interests of (all) the (three) worlds (inasmuch as it will serve as an occasion for the advent of the holy Ganga to the terrestrial plane). These very mighty princes have undoubtedly been burnt to death by Sage Kapila of immeasurable glory. You should not therefore offer them earthly* water, O wise prince ! (17–18) Ganga is the elder daughter of Himavān (the deity presiding over the Himalayas). Offer water, O mighty-armed prince, to (the soul of) your (departed) uncles in that river, O jewel among men ! (19) When the Ganga (which is capable of purifying the whole world) washes them, reduced as they are to a heap of ashes, this heap of ashes soaked by the Ganga, a river pleasing to the world, will take (the souls of) the sixty thousand princes to the celestial plane. (20) Taking the horse (with you), O highly blessed one, depart from this region, O jewel among men ! (Thereby) you ought to ensure the completion of your grandfather's sacrificial undertaking, O valiant prince !" (21) Hearing the admonition of Garuḍa, the celebrated Aṃśumān, who was exceptionally powerful and a great ascetic too, speedily returned (to his grandfather's capital) taking the (sacrificial) horse (with him). (22) Then seeking (the presence of) the king, who stood consecrated (for the sacrifice yet), O scion of Raghu, he related correctly what had happened as well as reproduced (faithfully) the utterance of Garuḍa. (23)

तच्छ्रुत्वा घोरसंकाशं वाक्यमंशुमतो नृपः । यज्ञं निर्वर्तयामास यथाकल्पं यथाविधि ॥२४॥
स्वपुरं त्वगमच्छ्रीमानिष्टयज्ञो महीपतिः । गङ्गायाश्चागमे राजा निश्चयं नाध्यगच्छत ॥२५॥
अगत्वा निश्चयं राजा कालेन महता महान् । त्रिंशद्वर्षसहस्राणि राज्यं कृत्वा दिवं गतः ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४१ ॥

Hearing that apparently awe-inspiring tale from (the lips of) Aṃśumān, the king (Sagara) concluded the sacrifice to the best of his capacity in accordance with the scriptural ordinance. (24) Having performed the sacrifice the glorious emperor for his part returned to his capital. The monarch, however, could not hit upon any plan for ensuring the descent of the Ganga (to the terrestrial plane). (25) Failing to reach any conclusion (in the aforesaid matter even) after a considerable time and having reigned for thirty thousand years, the great king ascended to heaven. (26)

Thus ends Canto Forty-one in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa
of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

◆

---

* There is a Smṛti text running as under :—

चाण्डालादुदकात् सर्पाद् वैद्युताद् ब्राह्मणादपि ।
दंष्ट्रिभ्यश्च पशुभ्यश्च मरणं पापकर्मणाम् ॥
उदकं पिण्डदानं च न तेषां तु विधीयते ।

"Death at the hands of a pariah or a Brahman or through being submerged in water, through snake-bite, through being struck by lightning or through being bitten by animals with fangs falls to the lot of men of sinful deeds (alone). Offering water or lumps of cooked rice or uncooked flour etc. is not recommended for their peace (in the other world)."

द्विचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLII

Aṃśumān and his grandson, Bhagīratha, successively practise austerities for bringing down the Ganga to the terrestrial plane. Brahmā grants a boon to Bhagīratha and exhorts him to propitiate Lord Śiva and secure His consent to receive the Ganga on His head.

कालधर्मं गते राम सगरे प्रकृतीजनाः । राजानं रोचयामासुरंशुमन्तं सुधार्मिकम् ॥ १ ॥
स राजा सुमहानासीदंशुमान् रघुनन्दन । तस्य पुत्रो महानासीद् दिलीप इति विश्रुतः ॥ २ ॥
तस्मै राज्यं समादिश्य दिलीपे रघुनन्दन । हिमवच्छिखरे रम्ये तपस्तेपे सुदारुणम् ॥ ३ ॥
द्वात्रिंशच्छतसाहस्रं वर्षाणि सुमहायशाः । तपोवनगतो राजा स्वर्गं लेभे तपोधनः ॥ ४ ॥
दिलीपस्तु महातेजाः श्रुत्वा पैतामहं वधम् । दुःखोपहतया बुद्ध्या निश्चयं नाध्यगच्छत ॥ ५ ॥
कथं गङ्गावतरणं कथं तेषां जलक्रिया । तारयेयं कथं चैतानिति चिन्तापरोऽभवत् ॥ ६ ॥
तस्य चिन्तयतो नित्यं धर्मेण विदितात्मनः । पुत्रो भगीरथो नाम जज्ञे परमधार्मिकः ॥ ७ ॥

Sagara having met his end (which is the law of Time, according to which one who is born must die sooner or later when one has played one's allotted role), O Rāma, the people desired the highly pious Aṃśumān to be their ruler. (1) The said Aṃśumān, O scion of Raghu, proved to be a very great monarch. His son, widely known by the name of Dilīpa, was (equally) great. (2) Having entrusted the kingship to the said Dilīpa, O scion of Raghu, Aṃśumān practised the severest (form of) askesis (for bringing down the Ganga to the terrestrial plane) on a delightful summit of the Himalayas. (3) Having continued for thirty-two lakhs of years in a grove intended for austerities (alone), the highly illustrious king, rich in asceticism, (eventually) attained heaven (only and not the desired grace of the holy Ganga). (4) Hearing of the (unnatural) death of his grand-uncles, the exceptionally glorious Dilīpa could not arrive at any decision (regarding the method of bringing the Ganga down to the terrestrial plane) due to his judgment being clouded by sorrow. (5) He felt anxious as to how the Ganga should (be made to) descend (to the terrestrial plane), how water could be offered to them and as to how he should (be able to) redeem them (their departed souls). (6) While the king, who was celebrated for his righteousness, was (thus) plunged in thought every moment, a most pious son, Bhagīratha by name, was born to him. (7)

दिलीपस्तु महातेजा यज्ञैर्बहुभिरिष्टवान् । त्रिंशद्वर्षसहस्राणि राजा राज्यमकारयत् ॥ ८ ॥
अगत्वा निश्चयं राजा तेषामुद्धरणं प्रति । व्याधिना नरशार्दूल कालधर्ममुपेयिवान् ॥ ९ ॥
इन्द्रलोकं गतो राजा स्वार्जितेनैव कर्मणा । राज्ये भगीरथं पुत्रमभिषिच्य नरर्षभः ॥१०॥
भगीरथस्तु राजर्षिर्धार्मिको रघुनन्दन । अनपत्यो महाराजः प्रजाकामः स च प्रजाः ॥११॥
मन्त्रिष्वाधाय तद्राज्यं गङ्गावतरणे रतः । तपो दीर्घं समातिष्ठद् गोकर्णे रघुनन्दन ॥१२॥
ऊर्ध्वबाहुः पञ्चतपा मासाहारो जितेन्द्रियः । तस्य वर्षसहस्राणि घोरे तपसि तिष्ठतः ॥१३॥
अतीतानि महाबाहो तस्य राज्ञो महात्मनः । सुप्रीतो भगवान् ब्रह्मा प्रजानां प्रभुरीश्वरः ॥१४॥

Dilīpa, for his part, who was exceptionally glorious, propitiated the Lord through many sacrifices. The king reigned for thirty thousand years. (8) Failing to arrive at any decision on the question of deliverance of his forbears, the king, O tiger among men, met his end (which is the law of Time) through illness. (9) Having installed his son, Bhagīratha, on the throne, the king, (who was) a jewel among men, ascended to paradise (the realm of Indra) through merit earned by his own self. (10) Emperor Bhagīratha, a pious royal sage, was issueless and as such desirous of progeny, O scion of Raghu ! Having entrusted the people as well as their rulership to his ministers, intent as he was on the descent of the Ganga (to the terrestrial plane), he practised prolonged askesis on Mount Gokarṇa (a summit of the Himalayas), O delight of the Raghus ! (11-12) With uplifted arms and senses fully controlled he exposed himself to five fires (placing himself in the midst of four fires, one in each quarter with the fifth in the shape of the sun overhead) and partook of food (only) once a month. A thousand years elapsed (even) as he remained engaged in severe asceticism, O mighty-armed one ! The almighty Brahmā (the creator), the lord and ruler of (all) created beings, got much pleased with that high-souled king. (13-14)

ततः सुरगणैः सार्धमुपागम्य पितामहः । भगीरथं महात्मानं तप्यमानमथाब्रवीत् ॥१५॥
भगीरथ महाराज प्रीतस्तेऽहं जनाधिप । तपसा च सुतप्तेन वरं वरय सुव्रत ॥१६॥
तमुवाच महातेजाः सर्वलोकपितामहम् । भगीरथो महाबाहुः कृताञ्जलिपुटः स्थितः ॥१७॥
यदि मे भगवान् प्रीतो यद्यस्ति तपसः फलम् । सगरस्यात्मजाः सर्वे मत्तः सलिलमाप्नुयुः ॥१८॥
गङ्गायाः सलिलक्लिन्ने भस्मन्येषां महात्मनाम् । स्वर्गं गच्छेयुरत्यन्तं सर्वे च प्रपितामहाः ॥१९॥
देव याचे ह संतत्यै नावसीदेत् कुलं च नः । इक्ष्वाकूणां कुले देव एष मेऽस्तु वरः परः ॥२०॥
उक्तवाक्यं तु राजानं सर्वलोकपितामहः । प्रत्युवाच शुभां वाणीं मधुरां मधुराक्षराम् ॥२१॥

Calling with hosts of gods on the high-souled Bhagīratha, who had been practising austerities, Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation) thereupon forthwith spoke to him (as follows):—(15) "I am pleased with the askesis duly practised by you, O great king, the ruler of people ! Therefore, ask (of me) a boon of your choice, O king of noble vows !" (16) Standing with joined palms the exceptionally glorious and mighty-armed Bhagīratha submitted (as follows) to Brahmā (the progenitor of all the worlds) :—(17) "If the lord is pleased with me and if there is any reward for asceticism, let all the sons of Sagara receive water from me. (18) When the ashes of these princes of gigantic body get soaked with the waters of the Ganga, all my (aforesaid) grand-uncles bid fair to attain the everlasting heaven. (19) Born in the line of Ikṣwāku, O glorious one, I ask for a (male) progeny so that our race may not get extinct. Let this be (treated as) another boon, O lord !" (20) Brahmā (the progenitor of all the worlds) thereupon answered the king, who had uttered the (aforesaid) prayer, in the following benignant and agreeable speech, full of sweet expressions:—(21)

मनोरथो महानेष भगीरथ महारथ । एवं भवतु भद्रं ते इक्ष्वाकुकुलवर्धन ॥२२॥
इयं हैमवती ज्येष्ठा गङ्गा हिमवतः सुता । तां वै धारयितुं राजन् हरस्तत्र नियुज्यताम् ॥२३॥
गङ्गायाः पतनं राजन् पृथिवी न सहिष्यते । तां वै धारयितुं राजन् नान्यं पश्यामि शूलिनः ॥२४॥

"Great is this ambition of yours, O Bhagīratha, a great car-warrior (as you are) ! May it be realized ! May success attend on you, O promoter of Ikṣwāku's race ! (22) Here is the river Ganga, the elder daughter of Himavān (the deity presiding over the Himalayas), which emanates from the Himalayas. Let Lord Śiva alone be invoked to support the Ganga when it descends on earth, O king ! (23) The earth, O monarch, will not be able to sustain the fall of the Ganga. And I do not perceive, O king, anyone, other than Lord Śiva (the Wielder of a trident), capable of sustaining it." (24)

तमेवमुक्त्वा राजानं गङ्गां चाभाष्य लोककृत् । जगाम त्रिदिवं देवैः सर्वैः सह मरुद्गणैः ॥२५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे द्विचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४२ ॥

Having thus spoken to the aforesaid king and instructed Ganga (as well to oblige Bhagīratha when the time comes), Brahmā (the maker of the universe) rose to his heaven with all the gods including the (forty-nine) wind-gods. (25)

Thus ends Canto Forty-two in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रिचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLIII

Pleased with the asceticism of Bhagīratha, Lord Śiva receives the Ganga on His head and discharges it into Bindusarovara. Branching forth into seven streams it then accompanies Bhagīratha to Rasātala and liberates his forbears on the way.

देवदेवे गते तस्मिन् सोऽङ्गुष्ठाग्रनिपीडिताम् । कृत्वा वसुमतीं राम वत्सरं समुपासत ॥ १ ॥
अथ संवत्सरे पूर्णे सर्वलोकनमस्कृतः । उमापतिः पशुपती राजानमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥
प्रीतस्तेऽहं नरश्रेष्ठ करिष्यामि तव प्रियम् । शिरसा धारयिष्यामि शैलराजसुतामहम् ॥ ३ ॥
ततो हैमवती ज्येष्ठा सर्वलोकनमस्कृता । तदा सातिमहद्रूपं कृत्वा वेगं च दुस्सहम् ॥ ४ ॥
आकाशादपतद् राम शिवे शिवशिरस्युत । अचिन्तयच्च सा देवी गङ्गा परमदुर्धरा ॥ ५ ॥
विशाम्यहं हि पातालं स्रोतसा गृह्य शंकरम् । तस्या वलेपनं ज्ञात्वा क्रुद्धस्तु भगवान् हरः ॥ ६ ॥
तिरोभावयितुं बुद्धिं चक्रे त्रिनयनस्तदा ।

"When the celebrated Brahmā (the adored even of gods) had left, O Râma, Bhagīratha waited upon Lord Śiva for a year remaining standing on the tip of one of his great toes stamped on the ground. (1) On a year being completed, Lord Śiva (the Spouse of Umā, who evidently appeared with Him), Protector of the Jīva (who has been likened to an animal because of its bondage), the adored of all the worlds, forthwith addressed the following words to the king :—(2) "I am pleased with you, O jewel among men, and shall do that which is pleasing to you. I shall receive the Ganga (the daughter of Himavān, the king of mountains) on My head (even as it descends on earth). (3) Swelling into the form of a very mighty stream and acquiring a formidable force, the celebrated Gaṅgā (the elder daughter of Himavān), the adored of all the worlds, thereupon descended forthwith, O Rāma, from the heavens (her reputed home) on the blessed head of Lord Śiva : so the tradition goes. Nay, the said Gaṅgā, who is all-glorious and most difficult to sustain, thought (within herself):—"Wafting Lord Śaṅkara along with my stream, I might as well enter Pātāla." Enraged to perceive her arrogance, the three-eyed Lord Śaṅkara (the Destroyer of the universe) for His part forthwith made up His mind to conceal her (in the midst of His matted locks).

सा तस्मिन् पतिता पुण्या पुण्ये रुद्रस्य मूर्धनि ॥ ७ ॥

हिमवत्प्रतिमे राम जटामण्डलगह्वरे । सा कथंचिन्महीं गन्तुं नाशक्नोद् यत्नमास्थिता ॥ ८ ॥
नैव सा निर्गमं लेभे जटामण्डलमन्ततः । तत्रैवाबभ्रमद् देवी संवत्सरगणान् बहून् ॥ ९ ॥
तामपश्यत् पुनस्तत्र तपः परममास्थितः । स तेन तोषितश्चासीदत्यन्तं रघुनन्दन ॥१०॥
विससर्ज ततो गङ्गां हरो बिन्दुसरः प्रति । तस्यां विसृज्यमानायां सप्त स्रोतांसि जज्ञिरे ॥११॥
ह्लादिनी पावनी चैव नलिनी च तथैव च । तिस्रः प्राचीं दिशं जग्मुर्गङ्गाः शिवजलाः शुभाः ॥१२॥
सुचक्षुश्चैव सीता च सिन्धुश्चैव महानदी । तिस्रश्चैता दिशं जग्मुः प्रतीचीं तु शुभोदकाः ॥१३॥
सप्तमी चान्वगात् तासां भगीरथरथं तदा । भगीरथोऽपि राजर्षिर्दिव्यं स्यन्दनमास्थितः ॥१४॥
प्रायादग्रे महातेजा गङ्गा तं चाप्यनुव्रजत् । गगनाच्छंकरशिरस्ततो धरणिमागता ॥१५॥

Fallen on the holy head of Lord Rudra, thick with coils of matted hair and resembling the Himālayas (in its colossal size), O Rāma, that sacred river could in no way reach the earth even though it made every effort (to do so). (4—8) Revolving in the coils of His matted locks it did not find an egress (even) on reaching their end; the divine stream continued to meander on His head alone for several rounds of years. (8–9) Bhagīratha saw it there and took to supreme asceticism once more. Lord Śiva felt extremely pleased with that, O scion of Raghu! (10) Thereupon Lord Śiva (the Destroyer of the universe) let fall the Gaṅgā into the Bindusara (a lake in the region of the Himālayas, attributed to Brahmā). While the river was being released, it got split up into seven streams. (11) (Of these) three blessed streams of the Gaṅgā, consisting of delightful waters, *viz*, Hlādinī, Pāvanī and even so Nalinī too, ran in an easterly direction. (12) Again, Suchakṣu and Sītā and even so the great river Sindhu—these three, consisting of blessed waters, flowed in a westerly direction. (13) Again, the seventh of them forthwith followed the chariot of Bhagīratha. Mounted on a beautiful chariot, the royal sage Bhagīratha too, invested with unique splendour, marched ahead and the Gaṅgā really speaking followed him. (In this way) the (holy) river descended from the heavens to the head of Lord Śaṅkara and came down from there to the earth (and thereby justified) the appellation of "Tripathagā" or the river following a threefold path, enjoyed by it). (14–15)

असर्पत जलं तत्र तीव्रशब्दपुरस्कृतम् । मत्स्यकच्छपसंघैश्च शिंशुमारगणैस्तथा ॥१६॥
पतद्भिः पतितैश्चैव व्यरोचत वसुंधरा । ततो देवर्षिगन्धर्वा यक्षसिद्धगणास्तथा ॥१७॥
व्यलोकयन्त ते तत्र गगनाद् गां गतां तदा । विमानैर्नगराकारैर्हयैर्गजवरैस्तथा ॥१८॥
पारिप्लवगताश्चापि देवतास्तत्र विष्ठिताः । तदद्भुतमिमं लोके गङ्गावतरमुत्तमम् ॥१९॥
दिदृक्षवो देवगणाः समीयुरमितौजसः । सम्पतद्भिः सुरगणैस्तेषां चाभरणौजसा ॥२०॥

शतादित्यमिवाभाति गगनं गततोयदम् । शिंशुमारोरगगणैर्मीनैरपि च चञ्चलैः ॥२१॥
विद्युद्भिरिव विक्षिप्तमाकाशमभवत् तदा । पाण्डुरैः सलिलोत्पीडैः कीर्यमाणैः सहस्रधा ॥२२॥
शारदाभ्रैरिवाकीर्णं गगनं हंससम्प्लवैः ।

There (on the earth's surface) the water (of the Ganga) meandered along with a terrific noise. And the earth looked exceptionally charming with its hosts of fishes and tortoises as well as with its multitudes of sea-elephants falling and (already) fallen (along with the stream on the earth's surface). At that time, seized with (great) bewilderment those celestial Ṛṣis and Gandharvas as well as the hosts of Yakṣas and Siddhas, and the gods stationed there (in the heavens) beheld from their aerial cars, big as cities, as well as from (the back of) their horses and excellent elephants the Ganga descended on the earth from the said heavens. Eager to see this celebrated, nay, wonderful and superb descent of the Ganga on the mortal plane multitudes of gods possessed of infinite strength collected (in the heavens). With the hosts of gods coming down with great speed and with the brilliance of their (shining) jewels the cloudless firmament looked as if irradiated by hundreds of suns. Scattered on that occasion with multitudes of sea-elephants and snakes as well as with throbbing fishes, the sky appeared covered with streaks of lightning. (Nay) with volumes of white foam that were being tossed about in numberless particles the vault of heavens looked as if overcast with autumnal (waterless and hence white) clouds and crowded with (flocks of) flying swans.

क्वचिद् द्रुततरं याति कुटिलं क्वचिदायतम् ॥२३॥
विनतं क्वचिदुद्भूतं क्वचिद् याति शनैः शनैः । सलिलेनैव सलिलं क्वचिदभ्याहतं पुनः ॥२४॥
मुहुरूर्ध्वपथं गत्वा पपात वसुधां पुनः । तच्छंकरशिरोभ्रष्टं भ्रष्टं भूमितले पुनः ॥२५॥
व्यरोचत तदा तोयं निर्मलं गतकल्मषम् । तत्रर्षिगणगन्धर्वा वसुधातलवासिनः ॥२६॥
भवाङ्गपतितं तोयं पवित्रमिति पस्पृशुः । शापात् प्रपतिता ये च गगनाद् वसुधातलम् ॥२७॥
कृत्वा तत्राभिषेकं ते बभूवुर्गतकल्मषाः । धूतपापाः पुनस्तेन तोयेनाथ शुभान्विताः ॥२८॥
पुनराकाशमाविश्य स्वाँल्लोकान् प्रतिपेदिरे । मुमुदे मुदितो लोकस्तेन तोयेन भास्वता ॥२९॥
कृताभिषेको गङ्गायां बभूव गतकल्मषः ।

The Ganga now flowed very swiftly, now tortuously; now it broadened out and now (again) narrowed down (when forcing its way through a ravine); now it was tossed high (when dashed against a rock) and now it glided. Now buffeted by (the waves of) the same water indeed (when turned back by the wind), the water (of the Ganga) spouted upwards once more and dashed to the ground again. (First) fallen on the head of Lord Śankara and again dropped on the earth's surface, the limpid water (of the Ganga), which rids those who come in contact with it of (all) sin, shone bright on that occasion. On that spot hosts of Ṛṣis and Gandharvas as well as the inhabitants of the globe touched (sipped) the water fallen from the person of Lord Śiva (the Source of the universe) as purifying. Those who had fallen from the heavens to the terrestrial plane through a curse were rid of their sin (responsible for the curse) by bathing in it. Having been rid of their sin through (the very touch of) that water and further invested with merit, they ascended once more to the heavens and returned to their respective realms. (Already) delighted with (the very sight of) that sparkling water and rid of their sin by having bathed in the Ganga, people rejoiced (all the more).

भगीरथो हि राजर्षिर्दिव्यं स्यन्दनमास्थितः ॥३०॥
प्रायादग्रे महाराजस्तं गङ्गा पृष्ठतोऽन्वगात् । देवाः सर्षिगणाः सर्वे दैत्यदानवराक्षसाः ॥३१॥
गन्धर्वयक्षप्रवराः सकिंनरमहोरगाः । सर्पाश्चाप्सरसो राम भगीरथरथानुगाः ॥३२॥
गङ्गामन्वगमन् प्रीताः सर्वे जलचराश्च ये । यतो भगीरथो राजा ततो गङ्गा यशस्विनी ॥३३॥
जगाम सरितां श्रेष्ठा सर्वपापप्रणाशिनी । ततो हि यजमानस्य जह्नोरद्भुतकर्मणः ॥३४॥
गङ्गा सम्प्लावयामास यज्ञवाटं महात्मनः । तस्या वलेपनं ज्ञात्वा क्रुद्धो जह्नुश्च राघव ॥३५॥
अपिबत् तु जलं सर्वं गङ्गायाः परमाद्भुतम् । ततो देवाः सगन्धर्वा ऋषयश्च सुविस्मिताः ॥३६॥
पूजयन्ति महात्मानं जह्नुं पुरुषसत्तमम् । गङ्गां चापि नयन्ति स्म दुहितृत्वे महात्मनः ॥३७॥

Mounted on a charming car Emperor Bhagīratha, the royal sage, drove ahead, while the Ganga followed at his heels. Full of delight all gods including hosts of Ṛṣis, as well as Daityas, Dānavas and ogres, the foremost among Gandharvas and Yakṣas, including Kinnaras and great Nāgas, as well as serpents and celestial nymphs, as also all (species of) aquatic creatures that existed followed the Ganga, keeping behind Bhagīratha's car. The illustrious Ganga, the foremost of (all) rivers, which is capable of eradicating all sins, followed in whatever direction Bhagīratha drove. Proceeding from there, it is said, the Ganga actually inundated the sacrificial ground of the high-souled sage Jahnu, the worker of miracles, who had been performing a sacrifice. Jahnu felt enraged to perceive the pride of Ganga, O scion of Raghu, and drank up (by dint of his yogic power) all the water of the Ganga, which was a supreme miracle indeed. Highly astonished, the gods including the Gandharvas and Ṛṣis thereupon glorified the high-souled Jahnu, the foremost among men, and reduced the Ganga to the position of a daughter of that exalted soul (by prevailing upon him to eject the Ganga). (16—37)

ततस्तुष्टो महातेजाः श्रोत्राभ्यामसृजत् प्रभुः । तस्माज्जह्नुसुता गङ्गा प्रोच्यते जाह्नवीति च ॥३८॥
जगाम च पुनर्गङ्गा भगीरथरथानुगा । सागरं चापि सम्प्राप्ता सा सरित्प्रवरा तदा ॥३९॥
रसातलमुपागच्छत् सिद्ध्यर्थं तस्य कर्मणः । भगीरथोऽपि राजर्षिर्गङ्गामादाय यत्नतः ॥४०॥
पितामहान् भस्मकृतानपश्यद् गतचेतनः ।
अथ तद्भस्मनां राशिं गङ्गासलिलमुत्तमम् । प्लावयत् पूतपाप्मानः स्वर्गं प्राप्ता रघूत्तम ॥४१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे त्रिचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४३ ॥

Pleased at that, the powerful sage, invested as he was with exceptional glory, discharged the Ganga through his ears. Hence the Ganga is spoken of as a daughter of Jahnu and called by the name of Jāhnavī (descended from Jahnu). (38) The Ganga once more followed in the wake of Bhagīratha's chariot and duly reached the excavation made by Sagara's sons (and filled it*). Then that foremost of rivers forced its way into Rasātala (the penultimate subterranean region) for consummating the feat of Bhagīratha (*viz*, the deliverance of his departed forbears). Leading the Ganga with (superhuman) effort (to Rasātala as aforesaid), the royal sage Bhagīratha too beheld his great grand-uncles reduced to ashes and fainted (as it were partly from grief and partly from exhaustion). The most sacred water of the Ganga forthwith submerged the heap of their ashes and, purged of their sin, (the souls of) Sagara's (departed) sons ascended to heaven, O jewel among the Raghus ! (39—41)

---

* The water turned brackish only when it was later drunk up and discharged by the sage Agastya.

Thus ends Canto Forty-three in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुश्चत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLIV

Applauding Bhagīratha, Brahmā urges him to gratify the souls of his departed great grand-uncles by offering them the water of the Ganga, and after doing his bidding Bhagīratha returns to his capital; the glory of hearing and reading the story of Ganga's descent on earth.

स गत्वा सागरं राजा गङ्गयानुगतस्तदा । प्रविवेश तलं भूमेर्यत्र ते भस्मसात्कृताः ॥ १ ॥
भस्मन्यथाप्लुते राम गङ्गायाः सलिलेन वै । सर्वलोकप्रभुर्ब्रह्मा राजानमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥
तारिता नरशार्दूल दिवं याताश्च देववत् । षष्टिः पुत्रसहस्राणि सगरस्य महात्मनः ॥ ३ ॥
सागरस्य जलं लोके यावत् स्थास्यति पार्थिव । सगरस्यात्मजाः सर्वे दिवि स्थास्यन्ति देववत् ॥ ४ ॥
इयं च दुहिता ज्येष्ठा तव गङ्गा भविष्यति । त्वत्कृतेन च नाम्नाथ लोके स्थास्यति विश्रुता ॥ ५ ॥
गङ्गा त्रिपथगा नाम दिव्या भागीरथीति च । त्रीन् पथो भावयन्तीति तस्मात् त्रिपथगा स्मृता ॥ ६ ॥
पितामहानां सर्वेषां त्वमत्र मनुजाधिप । कुरुष्व सलिलं राजन् प्रतिज्ञामपवर्जय ॥ ७ ॥

Reaching the excavation made by Sagara's sons, followed by the Ganga, the king (Bhagīratha) then entered the lowest stratum of the bowels of the earth, where his great grand-uncles lay reduced to ashes. (1) When their ashes had been thoroughly washed by the water of the Ganga, Brahmā, the overlord of the whole universe, (called on and) spoke to the king as follows:—(2) "The sixty thousand sons of the high-souled Sagara have (all) been delivered (from damnation), O tiger among men, and have ascended to heaven like gods. (3) Like (the very) gods all the sons of Sagara will abide in heaven so long as the water of the ocean continues to exist on earth, O prince ! (4) Nay, this Ganga will be your eldest daughter and will now be widely known in the world by the name (Bhāgīrathī) derived from you. (5) The Ganga will (also) be called Tripathagā (following a threefold path). Divyā (a heavenly stream) and Bhāgīrathī (daughter of Bhagīratha). Because it carves its way through the three spheres (*viz*, heaven, earth and the subterranean region), hence it is designated as Tripathagā. (6) Offer water here (on the bank of the Ganga) to all your great grand-uncles, O ruler of men, and implement the vow (undertaken by your forefathers and yourself, *viz*, of redeeming the sons of Sagara by offering them the water of the Ganga), O king ! (7)

पूर्वकेण हि ते राजंस्तेनातियशसा तदा । धर्मिणां प्रवरेणाथ नैष प्राप्तो मनोरथः ॥ ८ ॥
तथैवांशुमता वत्स लोकेऽप्रतिमतेजसा । गङ्गां प्रार्थयता नेतुं प्रतिज्ञा नापवर्जिता ॥ ९ ॥

राजर्षिणा गुणवता महर्षिसमतेजसा । मत्तुल्यतपसा चैव क्षत्रधर्मस्थितेन च ॥१०॥
दिलीपेन महाभाग तव पित्रातितेजसा । पुनर्न शकिता नेतुं गङ्गां प्रार्थयतानघ ॥११॥
सा त्वया समतिक्रान्ता प्रतिज्ञा पुरुषर्षभ । प्राप्तोऽसि परमं लोके यशः परमसम्मतम् ॥१२॥
तच्च गङ्गावतरणं त्वया कृतमरिंदम । अनेन च भवान् प्राप्तो धर्मस्यायतनं महत् ॥१३॥
प्लावयस्व त्वमात्मानं नरोत्तम सदोचिते । सलिले पुरुषश्रेष्ठ शुचिः पुण्यफलो भव ॥१४॥
पितामहानां सर्वेषां कुरुष्व सलिलक्रियाम् । स्वस्ति तेऽस्तु गमिष्यामि स्वं लोकं गम्यतां नृप ॥१५॥

"This ambition (of bringing down the Ganga to the mortal plane) was not at all realized in those days by that (celebrated) ancestor of yours (*viz*, Sagara), who enjoyed exceptional glory and was the foremost of pious souls. (8) Even so the vow could not be redeemed, O dear child, (even) by the royal sage Aṃśumān, who was invested with a glory which had no parallel in the world, (nay) who longed to bring the Ganga (down to the earth), was full of excellences, possessed a splendour resembling that of great Ṛṣis, was my equal in asceticism and devoted to the duties of a Kṣatriya. (9-10) The Ganga could not be brought (down to the terrestrial plane), O highly blessed one, even by your exceedingly glorious father, Dilīpa, much though he implored her (to that effect), O sinless prince ! (11) That vow has been implemented by you, O jewel among men, and you have (in consequence) attained the highest glory, solicited even by the greatest in the world. (12) The celebrated achievement in the shape of bringing down the Ganga (to the terrestrial plane) has been accomplished by you, O subduer of foes ! and by this you have attained the great reward of virtue (in the shape of the realm of Brahmā). (13) Even though pure, bathe yourself, O jewel among men, in the water (of the holy Ganga) which is fit for bath all the year round (unlike other rivers which are rendered unfit for bath during the monsoons) and attain the reward of your merit, O superman ! (14) Offer water to all your great grand-uncles, may all be well with you. I shall (now) go back to my realm, you may (also) return (to your own capital), O protector of men !" (15)

इत्येवमुक्त्वा देवेशः सर्वलोकपितामहः । यथाऽऽगतं तथागच्छद् देवलोकं महायशाः ॥१६॥
भगीरथस्तु राजर्षिः कृत्वा सलिलमुत्तमम् । यथाक्रमं यथान्यायं सागराणां महायशाः ॥१७॥
कृतोदकः शुची राजा स्वपुरं प्रविवेश ह । समृद्धार्थो नरश्रेष्ठ स्वराज्यं प्रशशास ह ॥१८॥
प्रमुमोद च लोकस्तं नृपमासाद्य राघव । नष्टशोकः समृद्धार्थो बभूव विगतज्वरः ॥१९॥
एष ते राम गङ्गाया विस्तरोऽभिहितो मया । स्वस्ति प्राप्नुहि भद्रं ते संध्याकालोऽतिवर्तते ॥२०॥
धन्यं यशस्यमायुष्यं पुत्र्यं स्वर्ग्यमथापि च । यः श्रावयति विप्रेषु क्षत्रियेष्वितरेषु च ॥२१॥
प्रीयन्ते पितरस्तस्य प्रीयन्ते दैवतानि च । इदमाख्यानमायुष्यं गङ्गावतरणं शुभम् ॥२२॥
यः शृणोति च काकुत्स्थ सर्वान् कामानवाप्नुयात् । सर्वे पापाः प्रणश्यन्ति आयुः कीर्तिश्च वर्धते ॥२३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे चतुश्चत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४४ ॥

Saying so, the highly glorious Brahmā (the progenitor of all the worlds), the overlord of gods, ascended to the realm of gods even as he had come. (16) Having offered the best water to Sagara's sons in order of seniority and according to the scriptural ordinance, and having (similarly) gratified his other forbears (too) and getting purified (thereby), the exceptionally glorious Bhagīratha, a seer among kings, for his part returned to his capital: so the tradition goes. His aim having been realized thereby he ruled over his kingdom, O jewel among men ! (17-18) The people greatly rejoiced to get him—their king (once more), O scion of Raghu ! With their grief (caused by separation from him) dispelled, they felt accomplished of purpose and found their anxiety gone. (19) In this way, O Rāma, the story (of the descent) of the Ganga has been narrated to you at length by me. Attain blessedness (as a reward of hearing it), may prosperity attend you ! The hour of Sandhyā prayers is slipping past. (20) The departed forbears of the man who narrates to the Brahmans, the Kṣatriyas and others this story,—which fetches wealth and renown, is conducive to longevity and ensures the birth of a male issue and also residence in heaven,—feel gratified and gods (too) get propitiated (thereby). He who listens, O scion of Kakutstha, to this blessed story of the descent of the Ganga (to the mortal plane), which is conducive to longevity, bids fair to attain all his desired objects. All his sins totally disappear and the span of his life as well as his fame extends. (21—23)

Thus ends Canto Forty-four in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLV

Viśwāmitra tells Śrī Rāma how in the remote past the gods and the demons conjointly churned the ocean of milk, using Mount Mandara as the churning rod, how Lord Śiva drank off the deadly poison skimmed out of it, how as a result of that churning appeared Lord Dhanvantari, a bevy of Apsarās, the beverage known by the name of Vāruṇī, the horse Uchchaiḥśravā, the Kaustubha gem and nectar, and how the conflict of gods and the Daityas ended in the destruction of the latter.

विश्वामित्रवचः श्रुत्वा राघवः सहलक्ष्मणः । विस्मयं परमं गत्वा विश्वामित्रमथाब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
अत्यद्भुतमिदं ब्रह्मन् कथितं परमं त्वया । गङ्गावतरणं पुण्यं सागरस्यापि पूरणम् ॥ २ ॥
क्षणभूतेव नौ रात्रिः संवृत्तेयं परंतप । इमां चिन्तयतोः सर्वां निखिलेन कथां तव ॥ ३ ॥
तस्य सा शर्वरी सर्वा मम सौमित्रिणा सह । जगाम चिन्तयानस्य विश्वामित्र कथां शुभाम् ॥ ४ ॥
ततः प्रभाते विमले विश्वामित्रं तपोधनम् । उवाच राघवो वाक्यं कृताह्निकमरिंदमः ॥ ५ ॥
गता भगवती रात्रिः श्रोतव्यं परमं श्रुतम् । तराम सरितां-श्रेष्ठां पुण्यां त्रिपथगां नदीम् ॥ ६ ॥
नौरेषा हि सुखास्तीर्णा ऋषीणां पुण्यकर्मणाम् । भगवन्तमिह प्राप्तं ज्ञात्वा त्वरितमागता ॥ ७ ॥

Struck with great wonder to hear the speech of Viśwāmitra, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Emperor Raghu) along with Lakṣmaṇa forthwith spoke to Viśwāmitra (as follows):—(1) "Most wonderful, O holy Brahman, is this charming and sacred story, told by you, of the descent of the Ganga (to the terrestrial plane) as well as of how the excavation made by the sons of Sagara came to be filled by it. (2) This night has slipped past us (two brothers) like an instant, O tormentor of (internal) enemies (in the shape of lust, anger and so on), even as we pondered on your entire story in detail. (3) The whole night, O friend of the universe, slipped past me as well as Lakṣmaṇa (the son of Sumitrā) as I pondered with him the charming story." (4) Then, on the day having clearly dawned, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Emperor Raghu), the subduer of his enemy, submitted as follows to Viśwāmitra, whose (only) wealth was his asceticism and who had (just) finished his daily routine (of devotions):—(5) "The sacred night (hallowed by the narration of the story of Ganga's descent) has passed. That which was most worthy of hearing has been heard. (Now) let us cross the holy river Ganga (which follows a threefold course), the foremost of (all) rivers. (6) Here indeed is a boat furnished with an agreeable matting (to sit on) and sent by Ṛṣis of meritorious deeds, which has expeditiously appeared on coming to know of Your Holiness having arrived here." (7)

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा राघवस्य महात्मनः । संतारं कारयामास सर्षिसंघस्य कौशिकः ॥८॥
उत्तरं तीरमासाद्य सम्पूज्यर्षिगणं ततः । गङ्गाकूले निविष्टास्ते विशालां ददृशुः पुरीम् ॥९॥
ततो मुनिवरस्तूर्णं जगाम सहराघवः । विशालां नगरीं रम्यां दिव्यां स्वर्गोपमां तदा ॥१०॥
अथ रामो महाप्राज्ञो विश्वामित्रं महामुनिम् । पप्रच्छ प्राञ्जलिर्भूत्वा विशालामुत्तमां पुरीम् ॥११॥
कतमो राजवंशोऽयं विशालायां महामुने । श्रोतुमिच्छामि भद्रं ते परं कौतूहलं हि मे ॥१२॥
तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा रामस्य मुनिपुंगवः । आख्यातुं तत् समारेभे विशालायाः पुरातनम् ॥१३॥

Hearing the aforesaid submission of the celebrated and high-souled Śrī Rāma (a scion of Emperor Raghu), Viśwāmitra (a scion of King Kuśa) caused Śrī Rāma along with (Lakṣmaṇa and) the (whole) host of seers (accompanying the sage, including himself) to be ferried across the river. (8) Then, having reached the opposite bank (of the Ganga) and duly greeted the host of Ṛṣis (waiting there to receive the distinguished party), they (Viśwāmitra and his followers) saw the city of Viśālā (in the distance) while seated on the bank of the Ganga. (9) Accompanied by the two scions of Raghu, Viśwāmitra (the foremost of hermits) then hastily proceeded from that place to the delightful and heavenly city of Viśālā, which vied with paradise. (10) Joining his palms (as a mark of respect) the exceptionally wise Śrī Rāma, forthwith made (the following) inquiries of the eminent sage Viśwāmitra concerning the foremost city of Viśālā:—(11) "I wish to hear, O great sage, what celebrated dynasty of kings is ruling (at present) in Viśālā; for great is my curiosity (in this behalf). God bless you!" (12) Hearing the aforesaid request of Śrī Rāma, Viśwāmitra (a jewel among sages) proceeded to relate (in the following words) a well-known old legend relating to (the foundation of) Viśālā. (13)

श्रूयतां राम शक्रस्य कथां कथयतः श्रुताम् । अस्मिन् देशे हि यद् वृत्तं शृणु तत्त्वेन राघव ॥१४॥
पूर्वं कृतयुगे राम दितेः पुत्रा महाबलाः । अदितेश्च महाभागा वीर्यवन्तः सुधार्मिकाः ॥१५॥
ततस्तेषां नरव्याघ्र बुद्धिरासीन्महात्मनाम् । अमरा विजराश्चैव कथं स्यामो निरामयाः ॥१६॥
तेषां चिन्तयतां तत्र बुद्धिरासीद् विपश्चिताम् । क्षीरोदमथनं कृत्वा रसं प्राप्स्याम तत्र वै ॥१७॥
ततो निश्चित्य मथनं योक्त्रं कृत्वा च वासुकिम् । मन्थानं मन्दरं कृत्वा ममन्थुरमितौजसः ॥१८॥

अथ वर्षसहस्रेण योक्त्रसर्पशिरांसि च । वमन्तोऽतिविषं तत्र ददंशुर्दशनैः शिलाः ॥१९॥
उत्पपाताग्निसंकाशं हालाहलमहाविषम् । तेन दग्धं जगत् सर्वं सदेवासुरमानुषम् ॥२०॥

Hear, from me, O Rāma, (even) as I narrate it, the story of Indra (throwing light on the glory of Viśālā) as heard (by me). Hear, O scion of Raghu, in reality what actually happened in this region. (14) In a Satyayuga of old very mighty sons were born of Diti and highly blessed ones of Aditi, who were powerful and exceptionally pious. (15) In course of time (even as they grew up), O tiger among men, the (following) thought haunted those high-souled beings :—"How can we possibly be immortal, immune from old age and proof against malady ?" (16) (Even) as they reflected an idea occurred to them at the moment, intelligent as they were : "Churning the ocean of milk we can surely obtain the immortalizing drink from it." (17) Making up their mind to churn the ocean and using Vāsuki (the king of serpents) as a cord and turning Mount Mandara into a churning rod, the gods as well as the demons (who were possessed of infinite strength) then started churning the ocean. (18) Now after a thousand years the heads of the serpent that was being used as a cord began to bite the rocks (forming part of Mount Mandara) with their fangs, throwing up copious venom. (19) (As a result of the churning) there appeared on the surface of the ocean (all of a sudden) a deadly poison bearing the name of Hālāhala. The whole universe comprising gods, demons and human beings began to be consumed by it. (20)

अथ देवा महादेवं शंकरं शरणार्थिनः । जग्मुः पशुपतिं रुद्रं त्राहि त्राहीति तुष्टुवुः ॥२१॥
एवमुक्तस्ततो देवैर्देवदेवेश्वरः प्रभुः । प्रादुरासीत् ततोऽत्रैव शङ्खचक्रधरो हरिः ॥२२॥
उवाचैनं स्मितं कृत्वा रुद्रं शूलधरं हरिः । दैवतैर्मथ्यमाने तु यत् पूर्वं समुपस्थितम् ॥२३॥
तत् त्वदीयं सुरश्रेष्ठ सुराणामग्रतो हि यत् । अग्रपूजामिह स्थित्वा गृहाणेदं विषं प्रभो ॥२४॥
इत्युक्त्वा च सुरश्रेष्ठस्तत्रैवान्तरधीयत । देवतानां भयं दृष्ट्वा श्रुत्वा वाक्यं तु शार्ङ्गिणः ॥२५॥
हालाहलं विषं घोरं संजग्राहामृतोपमम् । देवान् विसृज्य देवेशो जगाम भगवान् हरः ॥२६॥

The gods thereupon (mentally) sought the great Divinity Rudra (the Deity presiding over destruction), the Protector of the embodied spirit (that has been likened to a beast because of its bondage), seeking protection (with Him), and glorified Him, saying "Save us ! Protect us !!" (21) Addressed thus by the gods, Lord Śiva (the Controller even of the rulers of gods) forthwith appeared (on the spot), and (immediately) afterwards appeared on that very spot Lord Śrī Viṣṇu (wielding a conch and a discus). (22) Śrī Hari spoke smiling (as follows) to the aforesaid Lord Rudra, the Wielder of a trident :—"That which has appeared in the (very) first instance on the ocean being churned by the gods (conjointly with the demons) is really speaking Your share, O Jewel among gods, since it is You that take the lead among gods. (Therefore) standing here, O almighty Lord, accept this poison as the tribute offered in precedence over others." (23-24) Nay, saying so, Lord Viṣṇu (the foremost among gods) went out of sight on that very spot. Perceiving the fright of the gods and listening to the exhortation of Lord Viṣṇu (the Wielder of a bow made of horn), Lord Śiva (the Destroyer of the universe), the Ruler of gods, for His part (swallowed and) treasured up in His throat the deadly poison named Hālāhala as though it were nectar, and, leaving the gods, departed (to His own realm). (25-26)

ततो देवासुराः सर्वे ममन्थू रघुनन्दन । प्रविवेशाथ पातालं मन्थानः पर्वतोत्तमः ॥२७॥
ततो देवाः सगन्धर्वास्तुष्टुवुर्मधुसूदनम् । त्वं गतिः सर्वभूतानां विशेषेण दिवौकसाम् ॥२८॥
पालयास्मान् महाबाहो गिरिमुद्धर्तुमर्हसि । इति श्रुत्वा हृषीकेशः कामठं रूपमास्थितः ॥२९॥
पर्वतं पृष्ठतः कृत्वा शिश्ये तत्रोदधौ हरिः । पर्वताग्रं तु लोकात्मा हस्तेनाक्रम्य केशवः ॥३०॥
देवानां मध्यतः स्थित्वा ममन्थ पुरुषोत्तमः ।

Thereupon the gods as well as the demons all proceeded (once more) to churn the ocean of milk, O delighter of the Raghus, and immediately Mount Mandara (the foremost of mountains), that served as their churning-rod, sank into Pātāla (the lowest of the subterranean regions). (27) Then the gods including the Gandharvas extolled (as follows) Lord Viṣṇu (the Destroyer of the demon Madhu) :—"You are the resort of all created beings, particularly of gods (the denizens of heaven). (28) Protect us, O mighty-armed one, and be pleased to lift up the mountain (from the depths of Pātāla)." Hearing this, Lord Viṣṇu, the Ruler of the senses (of all), assumed the form of the divine Tortoise and, supporting the mountain on His back, lay down at the bottom of that ocean. Nay, holding fast with one hand the top of the mountain, and taking up His position in the midst of the gods, Lord Śrī Hari (the Ruler even of Brahmā and Lord Śiva), the Supreme Person and the Soul of the universe, took part in the churning.

अथ वर्षसहस्रेण आयुर्वेदमयः पुमान् ॥३१॥
उदतिष्ठत् सुधर्मात्मा सदण्डः सकमण्डलुः । पूर्वं धन्वन्तरिर्नाम अप्सराश्च सुवर्चसः ॥३२॥
अप्सु निर्मथनादेव रसात् तस्माद् वरस्त्रियः । उत्पेतुर्मनुजश्रेष्ठ तस्मादप्सरसोऽभवन् ॥३३॥
षष्टिः कोट्योऽभवंस्तासामप्सराणां सुवर्चसाम् । असंख्येयास्तु काकुत्स्थ यास्तासां परिचारिकाः ॥३४॥
न ताः स्म प्रतिगृह्णन्ति सर्वे ते देवदानवाः । अप्रतिग्रहणादेव ता वै साधारणाः स्मृताः ॥३५॥

Then after a thousand years emerged with a staff and a Kamaṇḍalu (in hand) first of all a male personage, Dhanvantari by name, the (very) embodiment of Āyurveda (the science of medicine), whose mind was given to extreme piety and (then) a bevy of celestial nymphs possessed of great splendour. (29—32) From the very cream (रस) produced as a result of that (famous) churning done in the water (or 'अप्' in the form of milk of that ocean) emerged those excellent damsels, O Jewel among men; therefore they became known as the Apsarās. (33) Six hundred million was the number of those exceptionally effulgent nymphs; while those who served as their female attendants were innumerable, O scion of Kakutstha ! (34) All those gods and demons refused to accept them as wife. Due to their non-acceptance alone they came to be known as public women. (35)

वरुणस्य ततः कन्या वारुणी रघुनन्दन । उत्पपात महाभागा मार्गमाणा परिग्रहम् ॥३६॥
दितेः पुत्रा न तां राम जगृहुर्वरुणात्मजाम् । अदितेस्तु सुता वीर जगृहुस्तामनिन्दिताम् ॥३७॥
असुरास्तेन दैतेयाः सुरास्तेनादितेः सुताः । हृष्टाः प्रमुदिताश्चासन् वारुणीग्रहणात् सुराः ॥३८॥

Then emerged (from the ocean of milk), O scion of Raghu, the highly blessed Vāruṇī (the deity presiding over spirituous liquor), a daughter of Varuṇa (the god presiding over the waters), seeking for a husband. (36) The demons (sons of Diti), O Rāma, did not take to wife the said Vāruṇī; but the gods (the sons of Aditi) O valiant one, accepted her, irreproachable as she was. (37) For that reason the sons of Diti came to be known as Asuras (those who did not accept Surā or wine), while for the same reason Aditi's sons became known as Suras (those who take wine). The gods felt thrilled and overjoyed due to their acceptance of Vāruṇī. (38)

उच्चैःश्रवा हयश्रेष्ठो मणिरत्नं च कौस्तुभम् । उदतिष्ठन्नरश्रेष्ठ तथैवामृतमुत्तमम् ॥३९॥
अथ तस्य कृते राम महानासीत् कुलक्षयः । अदितेस्तु ततः पुत्रा दितिपुत्रानयोधयन् ॥४०॥
एकतामगमन् सर्वे असुरा राक्षसैः सह । युद्धमासीन्महाघोरं वीर त्रैलोक्यमोहनम् ॥४१॥
यदा क्षयं गतं सर्वं तदा विष्णुर्महाबलः । अमृतं सोऽहरत् तूर्णं मायामास्थाय मोहिनीम् ॥४२॥
ये गताभिमुखं विष्णुमक्षरं पुरुषोत्तमम् । सम्पिष्टास्ते तदा युद्धे विष्णुना प्रभविष्णुना ॥४३॥
अदितेरात्मजा वीरा दितेः पुत्रान् निजघ्निरे । अस्मिन् घोरे महायुद्धे दैतेयादित्ययोर्भृशम् ॥४४॥
निहत्य दितिपुत्रांस्तु राज्यं प्राप्य पुरंदरः । शशास मुदितो लोकान् सर्षिसंघान् सचारणान् ॥४५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे पञ्चचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४५ ॥

Next emerged, O jewel among men, Uchchaiḥśravā, the foremost of (all) horses, Kaustubha, the most valuable of (all) gems, and even so nectar, the excellent drink. (39) Now over nectar there ensued a colossal destruction of the two races (gods and demons). On that occasion the sons of Aditi actually fought with the sons of Diti. (40) All demons got united with ogres. The result was a most deadly conflict, that bewildered all the three worlds (heaven, earth and the space intervening them), O valiant Rāma ! (41) When the whole host (of the gods and the demons) approached destruction, the very mighty Lord Viṣṇu then hastily carrried away the nectar, exhibiting His deluding potency in the form of a charming damsel. (42) Those who opposed the immortal Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Person, on that occasion were completely crushed in an encounter by the almighty Viṣṇu. (43) In this terrible major conflict between the sons of Diti and those of Aditi the heroic sons of Aditi completely destroyed the sons of Diti. (44) Having destroyed the sons of Diti and attained sovereignty, Indra (the destroyer of strongholds) felt delighted and ruled the (three) worlds including the hosts of Ṛṣis and the Chāraṇas (celestial bards). (45)

Thus ends Canto Forty-five in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षट्चत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLVI

Disconsolate over the death of her sons, Diti embarks on a course of austerities at Kuśaplava with the permission of her husband, Sage Kaśyapa, with the object of securing a son capable of killing Indra. The latter on coming to know of her intention serves her during the period of her consecration and, taking advantage of her falling asleep on one occasion with her head in a wrong position, and thereby transgressing the rules of purity, enters her womb and carves the foetus.

हतेषु तेषु पुत्रेषु दितिः परमदुःखिता । मारीचं कश्यपं नाम भर्तारमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
हतपुत्रास्मि भगवंस्तव पुत्रैर्महाबलैः । शक्रहन्तारमिच्छामि पुत्रं दीर्घतपोऽर्जितम् ॥ २ ॥
साहं तपश्चरिष्यामि गर्भं मे दातुमर्हसि । ईश्वरं शक्रहन्तारं त्वमनुज्ञातुमर्हसि ॥ ३ ॥
तस्यास्तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा मारीचः कश्यपस्तदा । प्रत्युवाच महातेजा दितिं परमदुःखिताम् ॥ ४ ॥
एवं भवतु भद्रं ते शुचिर्भव तपोधने । जनयिष्यसि पुत्रं त्वं शक्रहन्तारमाहवे ॥ ५ ॥
पूर्णे वर्षसहस्रे तु शुचिर्यदि भविष्यसि । पुत्रं त्रैलोक्यहन्तारं मत्तस्त्वं जनयिष्यसि ॥ ६ ॥
एवमुक्त्वा महातेजाः पाणिना सम्ममार्ज ताम् । तामालभ्य ततः स्वस्ति इत्युक्त्वा तपसे ययौ ॥ ७ ॥

Sore afflicted on her aforesaid sons having been killed (in the course of their conflict with the sons of Aditi), Diti addressed her husband, named Kaśyapa, son of Marīchi, as follows:—(1) "I have been deprived of my sons, O venerable sage, by your very mighty sons (the gods). (Now) I long for a son, secured (of course) through prolonged askesis, that may be able to kill Indra (the destroyer of my sons). (2) As such I shall practise austerities. Be pleased (therefore) to favour me with a powerful son capable of killing Indra. You ought to grant me leave." (3) Hearing her aforesaid submission, the exceptionally glorious Kaśyapa, son of Marīchi, replied (as follows) to Diti, sore afflicted as she was:—(4) "Let it be so. May all be well with you! Observe purity (till the birth of a son), O lady rich in askesis! (In the ripeness of time) you will give birth to a son who should be able to kill Indra in an encounter. (5) At the end of full one thousand years, provided of course you maintain purity, you will bring forth through me a son capable of killing Indra (the ruler of the three worlds)." (6) Saying so the highly glorious sage stroked her with his hand and then, touching her person and pronouncing his benediction (on her), set out to resume his austerities. (7)

गते तस्मिन् नरश्रेष्ठ दितिः परमहर्षिता । कुशप्लवं समासाद्य तपस्तेपे सुदारुणम् ॥ ८ ॥
तपस्तस्यां हि कुर्वत्यां परिचर्यां चकार ह । सहस्राक्षो नरश्रेष्ठ परया गुणसम्पदा ॥ ९ ॥

अग्निं कुशान् काष्ठमपः फलं मूलं तथैव च । न्यवेदयत् सहस्राक्षो यच्चान्यदपि काङ्क्षितम् ॥१०॥
गात्रसंवाहनैश्चैव श्रमापनयनैस्तथा । शक्रः सर्वेषु कालेषु दितिं परिचचार ह ॥११॥
पूर्णे वर्षसहस्रे सा दशोने रघुनन्दन । दितिः परमसंहृष्टा सहस्राक्षमथाब्रवीत् ॥१२॥
तपश्चरन्त्या वर्षाणि दश वीर्यवतां वर । अवशिष्टानि भद्रं ते भ्रातरं द्रक्ष्यसे ततः ॥१३॥
यमहं त्वत्कृते पुत्र तमाधास्ये जयोत्सुकम् । त्रैलोक्यविजयं पुत्र सह भोक्ष्यसि विज्वरः ॥१४॥
याचितेन सुरश्रेष्ठ पित्रा तव महात्मना । वरो वर्षसहस्रान्ते मम दत्तः सुतं प्रति ॥१५॥

Duly reaching Kuśaplava, when Kaśyapa had departed, O jewel among men, Diti, full of great joy, began to practise most severe austerities. (8) While she practised austerities, Indra (the thousand-eyed god), O jewel among men, rendered personal service to her through his exuberant wealth of virtues : so the tradition goes. (9) Indra brought (for her use) fire, blades of Kuśa grass, firewood, water, fruits as well as roots and whatever else was desired (by her). (10) Indra, it is said, served Diti at all times by massaging her (wearied) limbs and (thus) relieving her fatigue. (11) Full one thousand years but ten having elapsed, O Rāma, the celebrated Diti, who felt immensely delighted, forthwith spoke to Indra (as follows) :—(12) "(Only) ten years have (yet) to be spent by me in practising austerities, O jewel among the powerful ! May prosperity attend on you ! You will after that behold a (half-) brother (by your side). (13) I shall place on friendly terms with you my (future) son,—whom I sought for your (destruction's), sake my son, and who is (consequently) expected to be (ever) eager to conquer you—(so that) free from all anxiety you will enjoy with him, my son, the conquest of (all) the three worlds (that will be made by him). (14) A boon to the effect that I should have a son at the end of a thousand years was granted in my favour, O jewel among gods, by your high-souled father (Sage Kaśyapa) when implored (by me). (15)

इत्युक्त्वा च दितिस्तत्र प्राप्ते मध्यं दिनेश्वरे । निद्रयापहृता देवी पादौ कृत्वाथ शीर्षतः ॥१६॥
दृष्ट्वा तामशुचिं शक्रः पादयोः कृतमूर्धजाम् । शिरःस्थाने कृतौ पादौ जहास च मुमोद च ॥१७॥
तस्याः शरीरविवरं प्रविवेश पुरंदरः । गर्भं च सप्तधा राम चिच्छेद परमात्मवान् ॥१८॥
भिद्यमानस्ततो गर्भो वज्रेण शतपर्वणा । रुरोद सुस्वरं राम ततो दितिरबुध्यत ॥१९॥
मा रुदो मा रुदश्चेति गर्भं शक्रोऽभ्यभाषत । बिभेद च महातेजा रुदन्तमपि वासवः ॥२०॥
न हन्तव्यं न हन्तव्यमित्येव दितिरब्रवीत् । निष्पपात ततः शक्रो मातुर्वचनगौरवात् ॥२१॥
प्राञ्जलिर्वज्रसहितो दितिं शक्रोऽभ्यभाषत । अशुचिर्देवि सुप्तासि पादयोः कृतमूर्धजा ॥२२॥
तदन्तरमहं लब्ध्वा शक्रहन्तारमाहवे । अभिन्दं सप्तधा देवि तन्मे त्वं क्षन्तुमर्हसि ॥२३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे षट्चत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४६ ॥

Saying so, as the sun had (just) reached the meridian, the glorious Diti was overtaken by sleep and forthwith lay down placing her feet where her head ought to have lain. (16) Indra laughed and rejoiced to see her in an impure posture having (unconsciously) allowed her hair to touch her feet, and to behold her feet placed where her head ought to have lain. (17) Indra entered the orifice of her genitals (by dint of his yogic power), O Rāma, and carved the foetus into seven, fully alert as he was. (18) The foetus thereupon cried in a shrill voice while being cut with his thunderbolt, a weapon with a hundred edges O Rāma, and Diti then woke up. (19) Indra went on saying to the foetus, "(Pray) do not cry, do not cry !" Nay, the exceptionally glorious Vāsava (a name of Indra) continued to carve the foetus again and again (till each part was subdivided into seven), even though it remained crying. (20) Diti only said, "The foetus should not be killed, it should not be killed." Out of deference to the remonstrance of his stepmother, Indra (thereupon) emerged (from) her womb. (21) Appearing with his thunderbolt, Indra spoke to Diti with joined palms (as follows) :—"You lay asleep, O venerable lady, in an impure posture with your hair touching the feet. (22) Seizing that vulnerable point I carved into seven the foetus that was designed to kill Indra (myself) in an encounter. You ought to pardon this (offence of mine), O worshipful lady !" (23)

Thus ends Canto Forty-six in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLVII

Viśwāmitra tells Śrī Rāma how on the very site of the grove where Diti practised her austerities Viśāla, a son of Ikṣwāku, built the city of Viśālā. Sumati, the contemporary ruler of Viśālā, receives Viśwāmitra and his party as his distinguished guests.

सप्तधा तु कृते गर्भे दितिः परमदुःखिता । सहस्राक्षं दुराधर्षं वाक्यं सानुनयाब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
ममापराधाद् गर्भोऽयं सप्तधा शकलीकृतः । नापराधो हि देवेश तवात्र बलसूदन ॥ २ ॥
प्रियं त्वत्कृतमिच्छामि मम गर्भविपर्यये । मरुतां सप्त सप्तानां स्थानपाला भवन्तु ते ॥ ३ ॥
वातस्कन्धा इमे सप्त चरन्तु दिवि पुत्रक । मारुता इति विख्याता दिव्यरूपा ममात्मजाः ॥ ४ ॥
ब्रह्मलोकं चरत्वेक इन्द्रलोकं तथापरः । दिव्यवायुरिति ख्यातस्तृतीयोऽपि महायशाः ॥ ५ ॥

Sore afflicted on her foetus having been split into seven (batches of seven each), Diti for her part spoke as follows in a conciliatory tone to Indra (the thousand-eyed god), who was difficult to overpower (by force) :—(1) "This foetus has been split into seven through my fault, O ruler of gods ! No blame in this behalf attaches to you, O destroyer of the demon Bala ! (2) I wish to see your attempt at destroying my foetus turned favourable (to both of us). Let these seven (into seven parts of my foetus) fill the place of the seven (batches of) wind-gods (each consisting of seven and evidently killed in their conflict with the demons). (3) Widely known as the (forty-nine) wind-gods (Maruts, so called because they were addressed by you in the words 'मा रुदः'—do not cry—and assuming ethereal forms let these seven (into seven) sons of mine move in the aerial region in the form of the seven belts of air (bearing the names of Āvaha, Pravaha, Saṃvaha, Udvaha, Vivaha, Parivaha and Parāvaha), O dear child ! (4) Let one of these batches blow in Brahmaloka (the realm of Brahmā), another in the realm of Indra, and a third, known as the celestial air and enjoying great fame, blow in the aerial region. (5)

चत्वारस्तु सुरश्रेष्ठ दिशो वै तव शासनात् । संचरिष्यन्ति भद्रं ते कालेन हि ममात्मजाः ॥ ६ ॥
त्वत्कृतेनैव नाम्ना वै मारुता इति विश्रुताः । तस्यास्तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा सहस्राक्षः पुरंदरः ॥ ७ ॥
उवाच प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यमितीदं बलसूदनः । सर्वमेतद् यथोक्तं ते भविष्यति न संशयः ॥ ८ ॥
विचरिष्यन्ति भद्रं ते देवरूपास्तवात्मजाः । एवं तौ निश्चयं कृत्वा मातापुत्रौ तपोवने ॥ ९ ॥
जग्मतुस्त्रिदिवं राम कृतार्थाविति नः श्रुतम् । एष देशः स काकुत्स्थ महेन्द्राध्युषितः पुरा ॥१०॥
दितिं यत्र तपस्सिद्धामेवं परिचचार सः ।

My other four (batches of seven) sons, (each) O jewel among gods, indeed will actually traverse the (four) quarters from time to time according to your direction. May prosperity attend you. They will henceforth be widely known as the Maruts according to the very name given by yourself (*vide* verse 4 above). Hearing her aforesaid appeal the thousand-eyed Indra (the destroyer of strongholds) and the slayer of (the demon) Bala, made the following reply (to Diti) with joined palms:—"All this will come to pass as suggested by you: there is no doubt about it. (6—8) Your sons will move about in the form of (the wind-) gods. Having reached an agreement on these lines in the grove intended for austerities, and (thus) accomplished of purpose the mother (Diti) and her (step-) son (Indra) both ascended to heaven, O Rāma; so have we heard. This is that tract, O scion of Kakutstha, formerly inhabited by the great Indra, where he rendered (personal) service as aforesaid to Diti, who achieved the end of her austerities.

इक्ष्वाकोस्तु नरव्याघ्र पुत्रः परमधार्मिकः ॥११॥
अलम्बुषायामुत्पन्नो विशाल इति विश्रुतः । तेन चासीदिह स्थाने विशालेति पुरी कृता ॥१२॥
विशालस्य सुतो राम हेमचन्द्रो महाबलः । सुचन्द्र इति विख्यातो हेमचन्द्रादनन्तरः ॥१३॥
सुचन्द्रतनयो राम धूम्राश्व इति विश्रुतः । धूम्राश्वतनयश्चापि सृञ्जयः समपद्यत ॥१४॥
सृञ्जयस्य सुतः श्रीमान् सहदेवः प्रतापवान् । कुशाश्वः सहदेवस्य पुत्रः परमधार्मिकः ॥१५॥
कुशाश्वस्य महातेजाः सोमदत्तः प्रतापवान् । सोमदत्तस्य पुत्रस्तु काकुत्स्थ इति विश्रुतः ॥१६॥
तस्य पुत्रो महातेजाः सम्प्रत्येष पुरीमिमाम् । आवसत् परमप्रख्यः सुमतिर्नाम दुर्जयः ॥१७॥
इक्ष्वाकोस्तु प्रसादेन सर्वे वैशालिका नृपाः । दीर्घायुषो महात्मानो वीर्यवन्तः सुधार्मिकाः ॥१८॥
इहाद्य रजनीमेकां सुखं स्वप्स्यामहे वयम् । श्वः प्रभाते नरश्रेष्ठ जनकं द्रष्टुमर्हसि ॥१९॥

Now Ikṣwāku, O tiger among men, had a most pious son, born of Alambuṣā and widely known by the name of Viśāla. By him was built on this (very) site a city named Viśālā (after his own name). (9—12) The mighty son of Viśāla, O Rāma, was Hemachandra; while Hemachandra's immediate successor was known far and wide by the name of Suchandra. (13) The son of Suchandra, O Rāma, was widely known by the name of Dhūmrāśwa and Sṛñjaya, son of Dhūmrāśwa, came next. (14) The glorious and mighty Sahadeva was the son of Sṛñjaya, and Kuśāśwa was the highly pious son of Sahadeva. (15) The exceptionally glorious and mighty Somadatta was the son of Kuśāśwa, and Somadatta's son was known far and wide by the name of Kākutstha. (16) His yonder highly glorious and most renowned son, Sumati by name, who is hard to conquer, has his seat (of government) in this city at present. (17) By the grace of Ikṣwāku, really speaking, all the rulers of Viśālā are long-lived, high-souled, powerful and most pious. (18) We shall comfortably repose here for this one night; tomorrow morning you ought to (be able to) see Janaka, O jewel among men ! (19)

सुमतिस्तु महातेजा विश्वामित्रमुपागतम् । श्रुत्वा नरवरश्रेष्ठः प्रत्यागच्छन्महायशाः ॥२०॥
पूजां च परमां कृत्वा सोपाध्यायः सबान्धवः । प्राञ्जलिः कुशलं पृष्ट्वा विश्वामित्रमथाब्रवीत् ॥२१॥
धन्योऽस्म्यनुगृहीतोऽस्मि यस्य मे विषयं मुने । सम्प्राप्तो दर्शनं चैव नास्ति धन्यतरो मम ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे सप्तचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४७ ॥

Hearing of Viśwāmitra having arrived, the exceptionally glorious and highly renowned King Sumati, a veritable jewel among the foremost of men, came ahead to receive him. (20) Nay, offering (to him) the highest worship with the help of his family priest and kinsmen and inquiring after his welfare, the king forthwith spoke to Viśwāmitra with joined palms (as follows):—(21) "I am blessed and beholden to you, O sage, in that you have visited my territory and come within my sight too. None is more blessed than myself." (22)

Thus ends Canto Forty-seven in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLVIII

Having stayed overnight at Viśālā as an honoured guest of Sumati, Śrī Rāma, accompanied by Viśwāmitra and the other sages, heads towards Mithilā (the capital of King Janaka) and, on reaching on the way a deserted hermitage and, inquiring about it is told by Viśwāmitra how Ahalyā, wife of Sage Gautama, whose hermitage it was, was subjected to a curse by her husband.

पृष्ट्वा तु कुशलं तत्र परस्परसमागमे । कथान्ते सुमतिर्वाक्यं व्याजहार महामुनिम् ॥ १ ॥
इमौ कुमारौ भद्रं ते देवतुल्यपराक्रमौ । गजसिंहगती वीरौ शार्दूलवृषभोपमौ ॥ २ ॥
पद्मपत्रविशालाक्षौ खड्गतूणधनुर्धरौ । अश्विनाविव रूपेण समुपस्थितयौवनौ ॥ ३ ॥
यदृच्छयैव गां प्राप्तौ देवलोकादिवामरौ । कथं पद्भ्यामिह प्राप्तौ किमर्थं कस्य वा मुने ॥ ४ ॥
भूषयन्ताविमं देशं चन्द्रसूर्याविवाम्बरम् । परस्परेण सदृशौ प्रमाणेङ्गितचेष्टितैः ॥ ५ ॥
किमर्थं च नरश्रेष्ठौ सम्प्राप्तौ दुर्गमे पथि । वरायुधधरौ वीरौ श्रोतुमिच्छामि तत्त्वतः ॥ ६ ॥

Having inquired after the sage's welfare, Sumati, at the end of the dialogue that ensued in the course of their meeting with one another, spoke to the great sage Viśwāmitra as follows: (1)—"May God bless you! These two valiant lads, who are equal in prowess to gods, walk with the gait of the elephant and the lion and look like a tiger and a bull (respectively). (2) Having eyes large as the petals of a lotus and carrying (as they do on their person) a sword, a quiver and a bow each, they vie with the Aświns (the twin-born physicians of gods, celebrated for their physical charm) in their comeliness of form and stand at the threshold of youth. (3) (Nay) they look like two gods descended on earth from the celestial plane of their own will. How and what for have they travelled on foot to this place and whose sons are they, O sage ? (4) I wish to hear in reality as to wherefore the two heroes, the foremost among men, who are replicas of each other in the size of their body, in the outer expression of their feelings as well as in the movements of their body, have got on a track (so) difficult to tread, gracing this land (even) as the moon and the sun illumine the sky, and carrying excellent weapons (on their person)." (5-6)

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा यथावृत्तं न्यवेदयत् ।
सिद्धाश्रमनिवासं च राक्षसानां वधं यथा । विश्वामित्रवचः श्रुत्वा राजा परमविस्मितः ॥ ७ ॥
अतिथी परमं प्राप्तौ पुत्रौ दशरथस्य तौ । पूजयामास विधिवत् सत्कारार्हौ महाबलौ ॥ ८ ॥
ततः परमसत्कारं सुमतेः प्राप्य राघवौ । उष्य तत्र निशामेकां जग्मतुर्मिथिलां ततः ॥ ९ ॥
तां दृष्ट्वा मुनयः सर्वे जनकस्य पुरीं शुभाम् । साधु साध्विति शंसन्तो मिथिलां समपूजयन् ॥१०॥
मिथिलोपवने तत्र आश्रमं दृश्य राघवः । पुराणं निर्जनं रम्यं पप्रच्छ मुनिपुंगवम् ॥११॥
इदमाश्रमसंकाशं किं न्विदं मुनिवर्जितम् । श्रोतुमिच्छामि भगवन् कस्यायं पूर्व आश्रमः ॥१२॥
तच्छ्रुत्वा राघवेणोक्तं वाक्यं वाक्यविशारदः । प्रत्युवाच महातेजा विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः ॥१३॥

Hearing this submission of Sumati, Viśwāmitra told him everything as it had (actually) come about as also of their sojourn at Siddhāśrama and the destruction of the ogress (during that period). The king was greatly amazed to hear the narrative of Viśwāmitra. (Nay) he worshipped with due ceremony the two mighty sons of Daśaratha, who deserved (all) attentions and had called on him as his highly distinguished guests. (7-8) Having received the warmest hospitality from Sumati, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Raghu) spent one night there (at his capital) and proceeded from there to Mithilā the next day. (9) Beholding that beautiful capital of King Janaka all the sages (forming the party of Viśwāmitra) greatly admired Mithilā, exclaiming "Good ! Excellent !!" (10) Seeing then an old and delightful, though desolate, hermitage in a grove on the outskirts of Mithilā, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) inquired (as follows) of Viśwāmitra (the foremost of hermits) :— (11) "What can this (place) possibly be, which though looking like a hermitage is devoid of hermits ? I wish to hear, O venerable sir, whose hermitage it has been in the past." (12) Hearing the aforesaid question asked by Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the great sage Viśwāmitra, who is exceptionally glorious and skilled in speech, replied (as follows) :— (13).

हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि शृणु तत्त्वेन राघव । यस्यैतदाश्रमपदं शप्तं कोपान्महात्मनः ॥१४॥
गौतमस्य नरश्रेष्ठ पूर्वमासीन्महात्मनः । आश्रमो दिव्यसंकाशः सुरैरपि सुपूजितः ॥१५॥
स चात्र तप आतिष्ठदहल्यासहितः पुरा । वर्षपूगान्यनेकानि राजपुत्र महायशः ॥१६॥
तस्यान्तरं विदित्वा च सहस्राक्षः शचीपतिः । मुनिवेषधरो भूत्वा अहल्यामिदमब्रवीत् ॥१७॥
ऋतुकालं प्रतीक्षन्ते नार्थिनः सुसमाहिते । संगमं त्वहमिच्छामि त्वया सह सुमध्यमे ॥१८॥
मुनिवेषं सहस्राक्षं विज्ञाय रघुनन्दन । मतिं चकार दुर्मेधा देवराजकुतूहलात् ॥१९॥

"Ah, (please) listen ! I shall tell you in truth, O scion of Raghu, to what great soul this site of a (past) hermitage belonged and by whose wrath it was subjected to a curse. (14) The hermitage, which looked like a heavenly retreat, nay, which was highly honoured (even) by gods, formerly belonged to the high-souled sage Gautama, O jewel among men ! (15) In this very hermitage, O highly Meritorious prince, he practised austerities with (his wife) Ahalyā for many rounds of years. (16) Coming to know of his absence (from the hermitage due to his having gone out for his daily bath etc.), Indra (who is noted for his thousand eyes), the spouse of Śachī, appeared in the guise of the sage (Gautama) and spoke to Ahalyā as follows :—(17) 'Those hankering after enjoyment do not await the time favourable for conception (the sixteen nights following menstruation), O highly composed lady ! I, therefore, seek union with you, pretty woman !' (18) (Even) on recognizing him to be Indra (the thousand-eyed god), disguised as Gautama, O sciōn of Raghu, the misguided woman set her heart upon Indra in her eagerness to embrace the ruler of gods. (19)

अथाब्रवीत् सुरश्रेष्ठं कृतार्थेनान्तरात्मना । कृतार्थास्मि सुरश्रेष्ठ गच्छ शीघ्रमितः प्रभो ॥२०॥
आत्मानं मां च देवेश सर्वथा रक्ष गौतमात् । इन्द्रस्तु प्रहसन् वाक्यमहल्यामिदमब्रवीत् ॥२१॥
सुश्रोणि परितुष्टोऽस्मि गमिष्यामि यथागतम् । एवं संगम्य तु तथा निश्चक्रामोटजात् ततः ॥२२॥
स सम्भ्रमात् त्वरन् राम शङ्कितो गौतमं प्रति । गौतमं स ददर्शाथ प्रविशन्तं महामुनिम् ॥२३॥
देवदानवदुर्धर्षं तपोबलसमन्वितम् । तीर्थोदकपरिक्लिन्नं दीप्यमानमिवानलम् ॥२४॥
गृहीतसमिधं तत्र सकुशं मुनिपुंगवम् । दृष्ट्वा सुरपतिस्त्रस्तो विषण्णवदनोऽभवत् ॥२५॥

"With her inner self gratified (through union with Indra) she said to Indra (the foremost of gods), 'I stand accomplished of my purpose (through this meeting with you), O jewel among gods. (Pray) depart from this place at once, O lord ! (20) (Only) guard your own self as well as me in every way from the notice of Gautama, O ruler of gods !' Thereupon Indra heartily laughed and addressed the following words to Ahalyā:—(21) 'Highly gratified (through this meeting with you), O charming lady, I shall depart (even) as I came (unobserved by anyone).' Having thus copulated with her, O Rāma, he thereupon issued out of the hut with quick steps of course from fear (of being detected), apprehensive (as he was) of (meeting) Gautama. Immediately he saw the great sage Gautama entering the Cottage. (22-23) Dismayed to behold there Gautama (the foremost of sages),—who was hard to overcome (even) for gods and demons, equipped as he was with spiritual energy generated by askesis,—drenched with holy water (in which he had just bathed) and blazing like fire, carrying firewood (for the sacrificial fire) and blades of Kuṣa grass (in his hands), Indra (the ruler of gods) stood with his face downcast. (24-25)

अथ दृष्ट्वा सहस्राक्षं मुनिवेषधरं मुनिः । दुर्वृत्तं वृत्तसम्पन्नो रोषाद् वचनमब्रवीत् ॥२६॥
मम रूपं समास्थाय कृतवानसि दुर्मते । अकर्तव्यमिदं यस्माद् विफलस्त्वं भविष्यसि ॥२७॥
गौतमेनैवमुक्तस्य सुरोषेण महात्मना । पेततुर्वृषणौ भूमौ सहस्राक्षस्य तत्क्षणात् ॥२८॥
तथा शप्त्वा च वै शक्रं भार्यामपि च शप्तवान् । इह वर्षसहस्राणि बहूनि निवसिष्यसि ॥२९॥
वातभक्षा निराहारा तप्यन्ती भस्मशायिनी । अदृश्या सर्वभूतानामाश्रमेऽस्मिन् वसिष्यसि ॥३०॥

यदा त्वेतद् वनं घोरं रामो दशरथात्मजः । आगमिष्यति दुर्धर्षस्तदा पूता भविष्यसि ॥३१॥
तस्यातिथ्येन दुर्वृत्ते लोभमोहविवर्जिता । मत्सकाशं मुदा युक्ता स्वं वपुर्धारयिष्यसि ॥३२॥
एवमुक्त्वा महातेजा गौतमो दुष्टचारिणीम् ।
इममाश्रममुत्सृज्य सिद्धचारणसेविते । हिमवच्छिखरे रम्ये तपस्तेपे महातपाः ॥३३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डेऽष्टचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४८ ॥

"Seeing Indra (the thousand-eyed god) in his own disguise and guilty of misconduct, the sage, who was perfect in his moral conduct, forthwith spoke in an angry tone as follows :— (26) 'Since you have perpetrated this misdeed having assumed my disguise, O evil-minded one, you will be shorn of your testicles.' (27) The testicles of Indra (the thousand-eyed god) dropped instantly on the ground even as he was cursed as aforesaid by the high-souled Gautama, highly incensed as he was. (28) Nay, having imprecated Indra in the foregoing words, he cursed his wife too (as follows) :—'You will stay here for many thousands of years without food or drink, living on air (alone), and remain lying on ashes full of remorse. You will dwell in this hermitage unperceived by all created beings. (29-30) When, however, Śrī Rāma, son of Daśaratha, who is hard to overcome (for anyone else) visits this fearful grove, then (alone) you will be absolved (from your sin). (31) Completely rid of cupidity and infatuation by virtue of hospitality that you will extend to him (in the same invisible form), O immoral woman, you will regain your own (pristine) body and return to my presence full of joy.' (32) Having imprecated as aforesaid that woman of immoral conduct, the exceptionally glorious sage Gautama left this hermitage and the great ascetic resumed his austerities on a delightful peak of the Himalayas, frequented by Siddhas and Chāraṇas. (33)

Thus ends Canto Forty-eight in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकोनपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto XLIX

At the intercession of the gods Indra is supplied with testicles of a ram; Ahalyā gets back her pristine celestial form at the very sight of Śrī Rāma the moment he enters the hermitage, and the two divine brothers are entertained by the lady with the help of her husband.

अफलस्तु ततः शक्रो देवानग्निपुरोगमान् । अब्रवीत् त्रस्तनयनः सिद्धगन्धर्वचारणान् ॥ १ ॥
कुर्वता तपसो विघ्नं गौतमस्य महात्मनः । क्रोधमुत्पाद्य हि मया सुरकार्यमिदं कृतम् ॥ २ ॥
अफलोऽस्मि कृतस्तेन क्रोधात् सा च निराकृता । शापमोक्षेण महता तपोऽस्यापहृतं मया ॥ ३ ॥

तन्मां सुरवराः सर्वे सर्षिसंघाः सचारणाः । सुरकार्यकरं यूयं सफलं कर्तुमर्हथ ॥ ४ ॥
शतक्रतोर्वचः श्रुत्वा देवाः साग्निपुरोगमाः । पितृदेवानुपेत्याहुः सर्वे सह मरुद्गणैः ॥ ५ ॥
अयं मेषः सवृषणः शक्रो ह्यवृषणः कृतः । मेषस्य वृषणौ गृह्य शक्रायाशु प्रयच्छत ॥ ६ ॥
अफलस्तु कृतो मेषः परां तुष्टिं प्रदास्यति ।
भवतां हर्षणार्थं च ये च दास्यन्ति मानवाः । अक्षयं हि फलं तेषां यूयं दास्यथ पुष्कलम् ॥ ७ ॥

"Deprived of his testicles, Indra with timid eyes then (sought the presence of and) spoke to the gods headed by Agni (the god of fire), as well as to the Siddhas, Gandharvas and Chāraṇas (as follows):—(1) 'Hampering as I did the austerities of the high-souled Gautama by exciting his wrath (and thereby foiling his attempt to claim my throne), I have only just served the cause of gods. (2) In a fit of anger I have (accordingly) been deprived of my virility and Ahalyā (too) has been disowned by him. He has (thus) been robbed by me of his spiritual energy by being incited to pronounce a great curse (on me as well as on his wife). (3) Therefore, with (the co-operation of) the host of seers and the celestial bards, O jewels among gods, you should all see me restored to my manhood, since I have served the cause of gods.' (4) Hearing the appeal of Indra, all the gods, accompanied by the batches of the wind-gods, with Agni at their head, approached the celestial manes (Kavyavāhana and others) and spoke to them (as follows):—(5) 'Here is a ram full of virility, while Indra stands actually deprived of his manhood (by a curse from Sage Gautama). Taking the testicles of the ram (pray) transfer them at once to (the person of) Indra. (6) The castrated ram will surely afford you supreme satisfaction. Nay, to those men indeed who will offer (hereafter) such a ram for propitiating you, you will surely confer on them a handsome and undying reward.' (7)

अग्नेस्तु वचनं श्रुत्वा पितृदेवाः समागताः । उत्पाट्य मेषवृषणौ सहस्राक्षे न्यवेशयन् ॥ ८ ॥
तदाप्रभृति काकुत्स्थ पितृदेवाः समागताः । अफलान् भुञ्जते मेषान् फलैस्तेषामयोजयन् ॥ ९ ॥
इन्द्रस्तु मेषवृषणस्तदाप्रभृति राघव । गौतमस्य प्रभावेण तपसा च महात्मनः ॥१०॥
तदागच्छ महातेज आश्रमं पुण्यकर्मणः । तारयैनां महाभागामहल्यां देवरूपिणीम् ॥११॥
विश्वामित्रवचः श्रुत्वा राघवः सहलक्ष्मणः । विश्वामित्रं पुरस्कृत्य आश्रमं प्रविवेश ह ॥१२॥
ददर्श च महाभागां तपसा द्योतितप्रभाम् । लोकैरपि समागम्य दुर्निरीक्ष्यां सुरासुरैः ॥१३॥
प्रयत्नान्निर्मितां धात्रा दिव्यां मायामयीमिव । धूमेनाभिपरीताङ्गीं दीप्तामग्निशिखामिव ॥१४॥
सतुषारावृतां साभ्रां पूर्णचन्द्रप्रभामिव । मध्येऽम्भसो दुराधर्षां दीप्तां सूर्यप्रभामिव ॥३५॥
सा हि गौतमवाक्येन दुर्निरीक्ष्या बभूव ह ।
त्रयाणामपि लोकानां यावद् रामस्य दर्शनम् । शापस्यान्तमुपागम्य तेषां दर्शनमागता ॥१६॥

"Hearing the intercession of Agni, the celestial manes unanimously (agreed and) removed the testicles of the ram and actually implanted them in the scrotum of Indra (the thousand-eyed god). (8) From that time (onward), O scion of Kakutstha, the celestial manes collectively enjoy gelded rams (alone) and endow those offering them with the fruit of offering whole rams. (9) And from that time onward, O scion of Raghu, as an evidence of the (spiritual) power of the high-souled Gautama, Indra has actually borne the testicles of a ram. (10) Therefore, O exceptionally glorious prince, step into the hermitage of Gautama (who has performed virtuous deeds) and redeem this highly blessed woman, Ahalyā, who was (heretofore) invested with a celestial form." (11) Hearing the intercession of Viśwāmitra, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa, made his way into the hermitage, placing Viśwāmitra at his head, so the tradition goes, and beheld the celestial lady, who was highly blessed (in the sense that Śrī Rāma's eyes fell on her), whose effulgence had been brightened by her austerities, who could not be easily perceived even by gods and demons, much less by earthly beings even on drawing near (due to the curse of Gautama), who had been produced by the creator with great effort and looked like a product of magic, who looked like a blazing flame wrapped all over in smoke or like the halo of the full moon obscured by a veneer of snow and screened by a cloud or again like a dazzling bright circle of light round the sun appearing in the midst of water (existing in clouds). (12—15) Under the curse of Gautama, really speaking, she had grown imperceptible to (all) the three worlds pending the sight of Śrī Rāma: so it is said. Having reached the end of the curse she had (now) come within the range of their sight. (16)

राघवौ तु तदा तस्याः पादौ जगृहतुर्मुदा । स्मरन्ती गौतमवचः प्रतिजग्राह सा हि तौ ॥१७॥
पाद्यमर्घ्यं तथाऽऽतिथ्यं चकार सुसमाहिता । प्रतिजग्राह काकुत्स्थो विधिदृष्टेन कर्मणा ॥१८॥
पुष्पवृष्टिर्महत्यासीद् देवदुन्दुभिनिःस्वनैः । गन्धर्वाप्सरसां चैव महानासीत् समुत्सवः ॥१९॥
साधु साध्विति देवास्तामहल्यां समपूजयन् । तपोबलविशुद्धाङ्गीं गौतमस्य वशानुगाम् ॥२०॥
गौतमोऽपि महातेजा अहल्यासहितः सुखी । रामं सम्पूज्य विधिवत् तपस्तेपे महातपाः ॥२१॥
रामोऽपि परमां पूजां गौतमस्य महामुनेः । सकाशाद् विधिवत् प्राप्य जगाम मिथिलां ततः ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकोनपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ४९ ॥

Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Raghu) for their part clasped her feet with joy on that occasion; while she in her turn welcomed both, recalling as she did the prophesy of Gautama. (17) Fully composed (in mind) she offered (to them), with (due) ceremony as enjoined by the scriptural ordinance, water to wash their feet and hands with as well as other hospitality and Śrī Rāma (gladly) accepted them. (18) There was an abundant shower of flowers, (from the heavens), accompanied by the beating of kettledrums by gods. And there followed a great rejoicing among Gandharvas and celestial nymphs. (19) The gods heartily applauded the aforesaid Ahalyā,—who had been perfectly purified of body by dint of her austerities and (now) followed the will of Gautama,—in the words "Good ! Excellent !!" (20) The exceptionally glorious Gautama too (who had evidently returned to his hermitage on being forewarned of the advent of Śrī Rāma) felt happy in the company of Ahalyā; (nay) having duly worshipped Śrī Rāma according to the scriptural ordinance, the great ascetic resumed his austerities. (21) Having duly received the highest honour at the hands of the eminent sage Gautama, Śrī Rāma too proceeded from that hermitage to Mithilā. (22)

Thus ends Canto Forty-nine in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto L

Śrī Rāma and others reach Mithilā and are received in advance by King Janaka, headed by his family priest, Śatānanda, and Viśwāmitra satisfies their curiosity about the two princes of Ayodhya.

ततः प्रागुत्तरां गत्वा रामः सौमित्रिणा सह । विश्वामित्रं पुरस्कृत्य यज्ञवाटमुपागमत् ॥ १ ॥
रामस्तु मुनिशार्दूलमुवाच सहलक्ष्मणः । साध्वी यज्ञसमृद्धिर्हि जनकस्य महात्मनः ॥ २ ॥
बहूनीह सहस्राणि नानादेशनिवासिनाम् । ब्राह्मणानां महाभाग वेदाध्ययनशालिनाम् ॥ ३ ॥
ऋषिवाटाश्च दृश्यन्ते शकटीशतसंकुलाः । देशो विधीयतां ब्रह्मन् यत्र वत्स्यामहे वयम् ॥ ४ ॥
रामस्य वचनं श्रुत्वा विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । निवासमकरोद् देशे विविक्ते सलिलान्विते ॥ ५ ॥

Proceeding in a north-easterly direction from the said hermitage, and placing Viśwāmitra at his head, Śrī Rāma, accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), reached the sacrificial enclosure (of Janaka, the king of Mithilā). (1) Śrī Rāma for his part along with Lakṣmaṇa remarked to Viśwāmitra (a tiger among hermits), "Excellent indeed is the preparation made for the sacrifice undertaken by the high-souled Janaka. (2) Many thousands of Brahmans enriched with a study of the Vedas and living in different parts of the country can be seen here, as well as (small) enclosures set apart for Ṛṣis and full of hundreds of carts (carrying the requisites for their Agnihotra or daily oblations to the sacred fire). O highly blessed sage! Let a (suitable) site be selected, where we should halt, O holy one!" (3-4) Hearing the submission of Śrī Rāma, the great sage Viśwāmitra halted at a secluded and clean spot supplied with water. (5)

विश्वामित्रमनुप्राप्तं श्रुत्वा नृपवरस्तदा । शतानन्दं पुरस्कृत्य पुरोहितमनिन्दितः ॥ ६ ॥
ऋत्विजोऽपि महात्मानस्त्वर्घ्यमादाय सत्वरम् । प्रत्युजगाम सहसा विनयेन समन्वितः ॥ ७ ॥
विश्वामित्राय धर्मेण ददौ धर्मपुरस्कृतम् । प्रतिगृह्य तु तां पूजां जनकस्य महात्मनः ॥ ८ ॥
पप्रच्छ कुशलं राज्ञो यज्ञस्य च निरामयम् । स तांश्चाथ मुनीन् पृष्ट्वा सोपाध्यायपुरोधसः ॥ ९ ॥
यथार्हमृषिभिः सर्वैः समागच्छत् प्रहृष्टवत् । अथ राजा मुनिश्रेष्ठं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत ॥१०॥
आसने भगवानास्तां सहैभिर्मुनिपुंगवैः । जनकस्य वचः श्रुत्वा निषसाद महामुनिः ॥११॥
पुरोधा ऋत्विजश्चैव राजा च सहमन्त्रिभिः । आसनेषु यथान्यायमुपविष्टाः समन्ततः ॥१२॥

Hearing of Viśwāmitra having arrived (with his party) on that occasion, the irreproachable Janaka (the foremost of kings), full of humility, went forth all at once in a hurry to meet him, placing at his head his family priest, Śatānanda (son of Gautama) and (other) high-souled priests officiating at his sacrifice, and taking water to wash the hands (of the distinguished guests), and offered it to Viśwāmitra along with other items of hospitality (such as Madhuparka*) in accordance with the scriptural ordinance. Accepting the aforesaid hospitality of the high-souled Janaka, Viśwāmitra for his part inquired after the welfare of Janaka as well as about the unhampered progress of his sacrificial performance. Inquiring after the welfare of those hermits too (that had accompanied the king) as well as that of the priests officiating at the sacrifice and Śatānanda (the family priest), he next embraced all the Ṛṣis in order of seniority with great delight. The king then submitted Viśwāmitra (the foremost of hermits) with joined palms (as follows):—(6—10) "Let Your Holiness be seated on the seat (offered by me) along with these jewels among ascetics." Hearing the request of Janaka, the great sage (Viśwāmitra) sat down. (11) Śatānanda (Janaka's family priest) as well as the priests officiating at the sacrifice and the king (himself with his ministers sat down on their seats in order of seniority on all sides (of Viśwāmitra at his request). (12)

---

* A refreshing drink consisting of curds, ghee (clarified butter), water, honey and sugar-candy।—'दधि सर्पिर्जलं क्षौद्रं सिता चैतैश्च पञ्चभिः । प्रोच्यते मधुपर्कः .... ॥

दृष्ट्वा स नृपतिस्तत्र विश्वामित्रमथाब्रवीत् । अद्य यज्ञसमृद्धिर्मे सफला दैवतैः कृता ॥१३॥
अद्य यज्ञफलं प्राप्तं भगवद्दर्शनान्मया । धन्योऽस्म्यनुगृहीतोऽस्मि यस्य मे मुनिपुंगवः ॥१४॥
यज्ञोपसदनं ब्रह्मन् प्राप्तोऽसि मुनिभिः सह । द्वादशाहं तु ब्रह्मर्षे दीक्षामाहुर्मनीषिणः ॥१५॥
ततो भागार्थिनो देवान् द्रष्टुमर्हसि कौशिक ।

Turning his eyes towards Viśwāmitra, the said king then spoke to him (as follows) in that assembly:—"The preparations made for my sacrificial performance have been fulfilled by the gods today. (13) (Nay) the fruit of my sacrifice has been attained by me this (very) day through Your Holiness' sight (alone). I feel blessed and indebted to you, in that you, the foremost of ascetics, have arrived at my sacrificial grounds along with a number of sages. The wise (among the priests), O Brahman Ṛṣi, declare that my sacrificial vow is to continue for twelve (more) days (only). After that, O scion of Kuśa, you will see (with your clairvoyant vision) the gods who appear (in person) seeking their share (of the sacrificial offerings)."

इत्युक्त्वा मुनिशार्दूलं प्रहृष्टवदनस्तदा ॥१६॥
पुनस्तं परिपप्रच्छ प्राञ्जलिः प्रयतो नृपः । इमौ कुमारौ भद्रं ते देवतुल्यपराक्रमौ ॥१७॥
गजतुल्यगती वीरौ शार्दूलवृषभोपमौ ।
पद्मपत्रविशालाक्षौ खड्गतूणीधनुर्धरौ । अश्विनाविव रूपेण समुपस्थितयौवनौ ॥१८॥
यदृच्छयेव गां प्राप्तौ देवलोकादिवामरौ । कथं पद्भ्यामिह प्राप्तौ किमर्थं कस्य वा मुने ॥१९॥
वरायुधधरौ वीरौ कस्य पुत्रौ महामुने । भूषयन्ताविमं देशं चन्द्रसूर्याविवाम्बरम् ॥२०॥
परस्परस्य सदृशौ प्रमाणेङ्गितचेष्टितैः । काकपक्षधरौ वीरौ श्रोतुमिच्छामि तत्त्वतः ॥२१॥

Having submitted to Viśwāmitra (a veritable tiger among sages) as aforesaid on that occasion, the king, piously disposed as he was, questioned him once more with a cheerful countenance and joined palms (as follows):—"May God bless you! These two valiant lads, who are equal in prowess to the gods and whose gait resembles that of an elephant, look like a tiger and a bull (respectively). Having eyes as large as the petals of a lotus and carrying (as they do on their person) a sword, quiver and bow (each), they vie with the Aświns (the twin-born physicians of gods, celebrated for their physical charm) in their comeliness of form and stand at the threshold of youth. (14—18) (Nay) they look like a pair of gods descended on earth from the celestial plane of their own will. How and what for or for whose sake have they travelled on foot to this place, O sage? (19) Whose sons, O great sage, may be the two heroes wielding excellent weapons? I wish to hear in reality about the two gallant youths, who are gracing this land (even) as the moon and the sun illumine the sky, who are replicas of each other in the size of their body, in the outer expression of their feelings, as well as in the movements of their body, and who wear side-locks (on their head)." (20-21)

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा जनकस्य महात्मनः । न्यवेदयदमेयात्मा पुत्रौ दशरथस्य तौ ॥२२॥
सिद्धाश्रमनिवासं च राक्षसानां वधं तथा । तत्रागमनमव्यग्रं विशालायाश्च दर्शनम् ॥२३॥
अहल्यादर्शनं चैव गौतमेन समागमम् । महाधनुषि जिज्ञासां कर्तुमागमनं तथा ॥२४॥
एतत् सर्वं महातेजा जनकाय महात्मने । निवेद्य विररामाथ विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः ॥२५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे पञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५० ॥

Hearing the aforesaid inquiry of King Janaka, who was well known to be an exalted soul, Sage Viśwāmitra (who wields immense spiritual power) declared them to be sons of Emperor Daśaratha. (22) He also told Janaka of their intrepid journey to and sojourn at Siddhāśrama as well as about the destruction of ogres (at their hands), nay, of their visit to Viśālā and calling on Ahalyā as well as of their meeting with Sage Gautama and (finally) of their visit to Mithilā in order to examine the great bow (kept by Janaka for testing the strength of those suing the hand of his daughter). (23-24) Having related all this to the high-souled Janaka, the great sage Viśwāmitra, who was exceptionally glorious, forthwith paused. (25)

Thus ends Canto Fifty in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LI

At the request of Śatānanda Viśwāmitra tells him how Ahalyā was redeemed by Śrī Rāma and entertained him with the help of her husband. And Śatānanda in his turn commences narrating to Śrī Rāma the story of Viśwāmitra.

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा विश्वामित्रस्य धीमतः । हृष्टरोमा महातेजाः शतानन्दो महातपाः ॥ १ ॥
गौतमस्य सुतो ज्येष्ठस्तपसा द्योतितप्रभः । रामसंदर्शनादेव परं विस्मयमागतः ॥ २ ॥
स तौ निषण्णौ सम्प्रेक्ष्य शतानन्दो नृपात्मजौ । सुखासीनौ मुनिश्रेष्ठं विश्वामित्रमथाब्रवीत् ॥ ३ ॥
अपि ते मुनिशार्दूल मम माता यशस्विनी । दर्शिता राजपुत्राय तपो दीर्घमुपागता ॥ ४ ॥
अपि रामे महातेजा मम माता यशस्विनी । वन्यैरुपाहरत् पूजां पूजार्हे सर्वदेहिनाम् ॥ ५ ॥
अपि रामाय कथितं यद् वृत्तं तत् पुरातनम् । मम मातुर्महातेजो देवेन दुरनुष्ठितम् ॥ ६ ॥
अपि कौशिक भद्रं ते गुरुणा मम संगता । मम माता मुनिश्रेष्ठ रामसंदर्शनादितः ॥ ७ ॥
अपि मे गुरुणा रामः पूजितः कुशिकात्मज । इहागतो महातेजाः पूजां प्राप्य महात्मनः ॥ ८ ॥
अपि शान्तेन मनसा गुरुर्मे कुशिकात्मज । इहागतेन रामेण पूजितेनाभिवादितः ॥ ९ ॥

Hearing the aforesaid story told by the celebrated Viśwāmitra, who was a repository of wisdom, the exceptionally glorious Śatānanda, the eldest son of Gautama,—who was a great ascetic (like his father), (nay) whose brilliance stood heightened by his asceticism,—was thrilled (with joy) and felt greatly astonished at the very sight of Śrī Rāma. (1-2) Beholding those two princes (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) seated and comfortably ensconced, the celebrated Śatānanda now spoke to Viśwāmitra, the foremost of hermits (as follows):—(3) "Was my illustrious mother, who had been going through a long course of austerities, shown by you to Śrī Rāma (son of King Daśaratha), O tiger among sages ? (4) Did my exceptionally glorious and illustrious mother offer hospitality with wild fruits etc. to Śrī Rāma, who deserves to be honoured by all embodied souls ? (5) Did you tell Śrī Rāma the old story of the outrage which was done by Indra to my mother, O exceptionally glorious sage ? (6) May God bless you, O scion of Kuśika ! Was my mother united (once again) with my father, O jewel among ascetics, as a result of Śrī Rāma's sight and other factors ? (7) Was Śrī Rāma honoured by my father, O son of Kuśika, and has this exceptionally glorious prince come here after receiving the hospitality of that exalted soul ? (8) Was my father greeted with a tranquil mind by Śrī Rāma when arrived and honoured (by him) in this grove, O son of Gādhi (a scion of Kuśa) ?" (9)

तच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । प्रत्युवाच शतानन्दं वाक्यज्ञो वाक्यकोविदम् ॥१०॥
नातिक्रान्तं मुनिश्रेष्ठ यत् कर्तव्यं कृतं मया । संगता मुनिना पत्नी भार्गवेणेव रेणुका ॥११॥
तच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य विश्वामित्रस्य धीमतः । शतानन्दो महातेजा रामं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१२॥
स्वागतं ते नरश्रेष्ठ दिष्ट्या प्राप्तोऽसि राघव । विश्वामित्रं पुरस्कृत्य महर्षिमपराजितम् ॥१३॥
अचिन्त्यकर्मा तपसा ब्रह्मर्षिरमितप्रभः । विश्वामित्रो महातेजा वेद्म्येनं परमां गतिम् ॥१४॥
नास्ति धन्यतरो राम त्वत्तोऽन्यो भुवि कश्चन । गोप्ता कुशिकपुत्रस्ते येन तप्तं महत्तपः ॥१५॥
श्रूयतां चाभिधास्यामि कौशिकस्य महात्मनः । यथा बलं यथा तत्त्वं तन्मे निगदतः शृणु ॥१६॥

Hearing his aforesaid questionnaire, the great sage Viśwāmitra, who was well-versed in elocution, replied (as follows) to Śatānanda, a master of expression (himself):—(10) "What ought to have been done was done by me; no omission was made. Ahalyā (the wife of Gautama) has been (re-) united with the sage (her husband) as Reṇukā (mother of Paraśurāma) got (re-) united with (her spouse) Jamadagni (a scion of Bhṛgu)." (11) Hearing the aforesaid reply of the celebrated Viśwāmitra, a man of wisdom, the exceptionally glorious Śatānanda spoke to Śrī Rāma as follows:—(12) "Welcome is your advent (to this place), O jewel among men ! Placing at your head the eminent seer, Viśwāmitra, who cannot be (easily) worsted, O scion of Raghu, you have arrived (here) through (our) good luck. (13) The exceptionally glorious Viśwāmitra is credited with achievements which cannot (even) be conceived (by others) and has attained to the rank of a Brahman Ṛṣi through (sheer dint of) askesis. He is invested with a splendour which is beyond measure. I know him to be the highest resort (of all). (14) None else on earth is more blessed than you, O Rāma, inasmuch as your guardian is Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika), by whom great austerities have been performed. (15) Please listen ! I shall point out (to you) as it is the might as well as the reality of the high-souled Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika). Hear it of me (even) as I speak (to you). (16)

राजाऽऽसीदेष धर्मात्मा दीर्घकालमरिंदमः । धर्मज्ञः कृतविद्यश्च प्रजानां च हिते रतः ॥१७॥
प्रजापतिसुतस्त्वासीत् कुशो नाम महीपतिः । कुशस्य पुत्रो बलवान् कुशनाभः सुधार्मिकः ॥१८॥
कुशनाभसुतस्त्वासीद् गाधिरित्येव विश्रुतः । गाधेः पुत्रो महातेजा विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः ॥१९॥
विश्वामित्रो महातेजाः पालयामास मेदिनीम् । बहुवर्षसहस्राणि राजा राज्यमकारयत् ॥२०॥
कदाचित् तु महातेजा योजयित्वा वरूथिनीम् । अक्षौहिणीपरिवृतः परिचक्राम मेदिनीम् ॥२१॥
नगराणि च राष्ट्राणि सरितश्च महागिरीन् । आश्रमान् क्रमशो राजा विचरन्नाजगाम ह ॥२२॥
वसिष्ठस्याश्रमपदं नानापुष्पलताद्रुमम् । नानामृगगणाकीर्णं सिद्धचारणसेवितम् ॥२३॥
देवदानवगन्धर्वैः किंनरैरुपशोभितम् । प्रशान्तहरिणाकीर्णं द्विजसंघनिषेवितम् ॥२४॥
ब्रह्मर्षिगणसंकीर्णं देवर्षिगणसेवितम् । तपश्चरणसंसिद्धैरग्निकल्पैर्महात्मभिः ॥२५॥
सततं संकुलं श्रीमद्ब्रह्मकल्पैर्महात्मभिः । अब्भक्षैर्वायुभक्षैश्च शीर्णपर्णाशनैस्तथा ॥२६॥
फलमूलाशनैर्दान्तैर्जितदोषैर्जितेन्द्रियैः । ऋषिभिर्वालखिल्यैश्च जपहोमपरायणैः ॥२७॥
अन्यैर्वैखानसैश्चैव समन्तादुपशोभितम् ।
वसिष्ठस्याश्रमपदं ब्रह्मलोकमिवापरम् । ददर्श जयतां श्रेष्ठो विश्वामित्रो महाबलः ॥२८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५१ ॥

"This sage has for a long time been a pious king capable of subduing his enemies, knowing what is right, learned and devoted to the good of the people. (17) Formerly there was a king, Kuśa by name, a son of Brahmā (the lord of created beings); while Kuśa's son was the mighty and highly pious Kuśanābha. (18) The son of Kuśanābha was widely known by the simple name of Gādhi, while Gādhi's exceptionally glorious son is the great sage Viśwāmitra. (19) The highly glorious King Viśwāmitra carried on his administration and ruled over the earth for many thousands of years. (20) Collecting an army and accompanied by an Akṣauhiṇī (a division consisting of 21,870 elephants, an equal number of chariots, 65,610 horse and 109,350 foot), the exceptionally glorious king once went round the globe. (21) Marching successively across cities and states, rivers and great mountains and hermitages, the king, they say, came to the site of Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, rich in flowers, creepers and trees of various kinds, infested with hordes of wild animals of every description, and frequented by Siddhas and Chāraṇas. (22-23) It was graced by (the presence of) gods, demons, Gandharvas and Kinnaras, abounded in most peaceful deer and was resorted to by flocks of birds. (24) (Nay,) it was crowded with multitudes of Brahman Ṛṣis, visited by batches of celestial sages and incessantly thronged with noble souls accomplished of purpose through the performance of austerities and resplendent as fire, and adorned on all sides with exalted souls vying with the glorious Brahmā (the creator), Ṛṣis living (in some cases) on water or air and (in other cases) on leaves fallen on earth or on fruits and roots (alone), (nay) who had controlled not only their external senses but their inner sense (the mind) as well and conquered (all) their weaknesses as well as with the class of Ṛṣis known as the Vālakhilyas (so called because they took their descent from the hair of Brahmā), intent on Japa (the muttering of prayers) and Homa (pouring oblations into the sacred fire), and others, called the Vaikhānasas (who are said to have sprung up from the nails* of Brahmā). The mighty Viśwāmitra, the foremost of the victorious, beheld the (aforesaid) site of the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha, which was a second Brahmaloka (the realm of Brahmā) as it were. (25—28)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-one in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्विपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LII

Vasiṣṭha enjoins his cow of plenty, Śabalā by name, to yield necessary articles for entertaining Viśwāmitra.

तं दृष्ट्वा परमप्रीतो विश्वामित्रो महाबलः । प्रणतो विनयाद् वीरो वसिष्ठं जपतां वरम् ॥ १ ॥
स्वागतं तव चेत्युक्तो वसिष्ठेन महात्मना । आसनं चास्य भगवान् वसिष्ठो व्यादिदेश ह ॥ २ ॥
उपविष्टाय च तदा विश्वामित्राय धीमते । यथान्यायं मुनिवरः फलमूलमुपाहरत् ॥ ३ ॥
प्रतिगृह्य तु तां पूजां वसिष्ठाद् राजसत्तमः । तपोऽग्निहोत्रशिष्येषु कुशलं पर्यपृच्छत ॥ ४ ॥
विश्वामित्रो महातेजा वनस्पतिगणे तदा । सर्वत्र कुशलं प्राह वसिष्ठो राजसत्तमम् ॥ ५ ॥
सुखोपविष्टं राजानं विश्वामित्रं महातपाः । पप्रच्छ जपतां श्रेष्ठो वसिष्ठो ब्रह्मणः सुतः ॥ ६ ॥
कच्चित्ते कुशलं राजन् कच्चिद् धर्मेण रञ्जयन् । प्रजाः पालयसे राजन् राजवृत्तेन धार्मिक ॥ ७ ॥
कच्चित्ते सम्भृता भृत्याः कच्चित् तिष्ठन्ति शासने । कच्चित्ते विजिताः सर्वे रिपवो रिपुसूदन ॥ ८ ॥
कच्चिद् बलेषु कोशेषु मित्रेषु च परंतप । कुशलं ते नरव्याघ्र पुत्रपौत्रे तथानघ ॥ ९ ॥

Supremely delighted to behold the celebrated Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of those engaged in muttering prayers, the very mighty hero, Viśwāmitra, bowed low to him out of modesty and was greeted by the high-souled Vasiṣṭha in the words "Welcome is your advent (to this hermitage)!" Nay, the almighty Vasiṣṭha, it is said, offered him a seat; and, when he had taken his seat, the great sage then placed before the learned Viśwāmitra fruits and roots according to the rules of propriety. (1—3) Accepting the hospitality mentioned above from Vasiṣṭha, the exceptionally glorious Viśwāmitra, the foremost of kings, for his part then inquired whether everything was well with his austerities and Agnihotra (worship of the sacred fire) as well as with his pupils and the plant kingdom (the means of their sustenance). (In reply to his inquiry) Vasiṣṭha told Viśwāmitra (the foremost of kings) that everything went on well. (4-5) The great ascetic Vasiṣṭha, son of Brahmā (the creator), the foremost of ascetics, questioned the king (as follows) when he had been comfortably seated:—(6) "Is everything well with you, O monarch? Do you rule over the people, O pious king, according to the (fourfold) course of conduct prescribed for a king, delighting them with your (love of) righteousness? (7) Are servants duly maintained by you and do they (ever) stand at your beck and call? Have all your enemies been fully conquered, O destroyer of foes? (8) Is all well with your forces, treasuries and allies, O destroyer of foes, no less than with your sons and grandsons, O tiger among men, divorced from sin as you are?" (9)

---

* The Śruti says:—ये नखास्ते वैखानसा ये वालास्ते वालखिल्याः ।

सर्वत्र कुशलं राजा वसिष्ठं प्रत्युदाहरत् । विश्वामित्रो महातेजा वसिष्ठं विनयान्वितम् ॥१०॥
कृत्वा तौ सुचिरं कालं धर्मिष्ठो ताः कथास्तदा । मुदा परमया युक्तौ प्रीयेतां तौ परस्परम् ॥११॥
ततो वसिष्ठो भगवान् कथान्ते रघुनन्दन । विश्वामित्रमिदं वाक्यमुवाच प्रहसन्निव ॥१२॥
आतिथ्यं कर्तुमिच्छामि बलस्यास्य महाबल । तव चैवाप्रमेयस्य यथार्हं सम्प्रतीच्छ मे ॥१३॥
सत्क्रियां हि भवानेतां प्रतीच्छतु मया कृताम् । राजंस्त्वमतिथिश्रेष्ठः पूजनीयः प्रयत्नतः ॥१४॥
एवमुक्तो वसिष्ठेन विश्वामित्रो महामतिः । कृतमित्यब्रवीद् राजा पूजावाक्येन मे त्वया ॥१५॥
फलमूलेन भगवन् विद्यते यत् तवाश्रमे । पाद्येनाचमनीयेन भगवद्दर्शनेन च ॥१६॥
सर्वथा च महाप्राज्ञ पूजार्हेण सुपूजितः । नमस्तेऽस्तु गमिष्यामि मैत्रेणेक्षस्व चक्षुषा ॥१७॥

In reply, the exceptionally glorious King Viśwāmitra told Vasiṣṭha, the noblest of all and rich in culture, of his all-round welfare. (10) Having carried on all such talks for a very long time on that occasion, and full of supreme joy, the two celebrated and most pious souls felt pleased with each other. (11) Then, at the end of the dialogue, O scion of Raghu, the almighty Vasiṣṭha spoke to Viśwāmitra as follows, as though heartily laughing (for joy):—(12) "I wish to offer hospitality to this (distinguished) army (of yours) as well as to your own unfathomable self, according to your dignity, O very mighty king ! Please accept it from me. (13) Receive you this honour done by me, O king, since you are the worthiest of my guests and (as such) deserve to be zealously honoured (by me)." (14) Requested thus by Vasiṣṭha, the great-minded King Viśwāmitra, replied as follows:—"Honour has been done to me by your (very) words of hospitality. (15) Duly entertained in every way by you, who deserve to be honoured (by me), O venerable sir, through fruits and roots that are available in your hermitage and water (offered to us) for washing our feet and rinsing our mouth with, nay, by your very sight, O highly enlightened soul, I shall (now) depart. Let my salutation be (acceptable) to you. (Pray, ever) regard me with a friendly eye." (16-17)

एवं ब्रुवन्तं राजानं वसिष्ठः पुनरेव हि । न्यमन्त्रयत धर्मात्मा पुनः पुनरुदारधीः ॥१८॥
बाढमित्येव गाधेयो वसिष्ठं प्रत्युवाच ह । यथा प्रियं भगवतस्तथास्तु मुनिपुंगव ॥१९॥
एवमुक्तो महातेजा वसिष्ठो जपतां वरः । आजुहाव ततः प्रीतः कल्माषीं धूतकल्मषाम् ॥२०॥
एह्येहि शबले क्षिप्रं शृणु चापि वचो मम ।
सबलस्यास्य राजर्षेः कर्तुं व्यवसितोऽस्म्यहम् । भोजनेन महार्हेण सत्कारं संविधत्स्व मे ॥२१॥
यस्य यस्य यथाकामं षड्रसेष्वभिपूजितम् । तत् सर्वं कामधुग् दिव्ये अभिवर्ष कृते मम ॥२२॥
रसेनान्नेन पानेन लेह्यचोष्येण संयुतम् । अन्नानां निचयं सर्वं सृजस्व शबले त्वर ॥२३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे द्विपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५२ ॥

The pious and liberal-minded Vasiṣṭha actually invited the king once more, even though the latter went on saying like that again and again. (18) (Thereupon) Viśwāmitra (son of Gādhi), they say, replied to Vasiṣṭha as follows:—"All right, let it be as it pleases your venerable self, O jewel among sages !" (19) Full of delight, when addressed thus (by Viśwāmitra), the exceptionally glorious Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of ascetics, then called (in the following words to) his cow, Śabalā by name (so called because of her spotted colour), that had been washed clean of mud:—(20) "Come along, (pray) come soon, O Śabalā, and hear also what I say. I am determined to entertain with a sumptuous repast this royal sage (Viśwāmitra) along with his army. (Please) get everything ready for me. (21) Yield for my sake in desired quantities, O celestial cow of plenty, each one of the six varieties of dishes (*viz*, pungent, acid, sweet, saline, bitter and alkaline) that may be pleasing to a particular individual, to his heart's content. Look sharp ! Produce, O Śabalā, in plenty all kinds of food accompanied by sweetmeats, drinks (of various kinds) and dishes that can be licked (such as honey) or sucked (such as the juice of a mango). (22-23)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-two in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रिपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LIII

Heartily entertained along with his army by Vasiṣṭha with delicious foods and drinks yielded by his cow of plenty, Viśwāmitra asks of him the cow, which Vasiṣṭha declines to part with.

एवमुक्ता वसिष्ठेन शबला शत्रुसूदन । विदधे कामधुक् कामान् यस्य यस्येप्सितं यथा ॥ १ ॥
इक्षून् मधूंस्तथा लाजान् मैरेयांश्च वरासवान् । पानानि च महार्हाणि भक्ष्यांश्चोच्चावचानपि ॥ २ ॥
उष्णाढ्यस्यौदनस्यात्र राशयः पर्वतोपमाः । मृष्टान्यन्नानि सूपाश्च दधिकुल्यास्तथैव च ॥ ३ ॥
नानास्वादुरसानां च खाण्डवानां तथैव च । भोजनानि सुपूर्णानि गौडानि च सहस्रशः ॥ ४ ॥
सर्वमासीत् सुसंतुष्टं हृष्टपुष्टजनायुतम् । विश्वामित्रबलं राम वसिष्ठेन सुतर्पितम् ॥ ५ ॥
विश्वामित्रो हि राजर्षिर्हृष्टपुष्टस्तदाभवत् । सान्तःपुरवरो राजा सब्राह्मणपुरोहितः ॥ ६ ॥
सामात्यो मन्त्रिसहितः सभृत्यः पूजितस्तदा । युक्तः परमहर्षेण वसिष्ठमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ७ ॥
पूजितोऽहं त्वया ब्रह्मन् पूजार्हेण सुसत्कृतः । श्रूयतामभिधास्यामि वाक्यं वाक्यविशारद ॥ ८ ॥
गवां शतसहस्रेण दीयतां शबला मम । रत्नं हि भगवन्नेतद् रत्नहारी च पार्थिवः ॥ ९ ॥
तस्मान्मे शबलां देहि ममैषा धर्मतो द्विज । एवमुक्तस्तु भगवान् वसिष्ठो मुनिपुंगवः ॥१०॥
विश्वामित्रेण धर्मात्मा प्रत्युवाच महीपतिम् ।

Thus instructed by Vasiṣṭha, O destroyer of foes, Śabalā, a cow of plenty (as she was), yielded all luxuries as desired by each particular individual (of Viśwāmitra's camp)—sugar-canes (including all their products—sugar etc.), honeys (of various kinds), even so fried grains of paddy, Maireya (a kind of wine, made of jaggery and other substances) and excellent spirituous liquors distilled from boiled or unboiled sap of sugar-cane, as well as (other) costly drinks and foods of various kinds (especially those requiring mastication) also. (1-2) In this feast could be seen heaps, as high as mountains, of steaming rice, varieties of sweet rice boiled in milk, nay, pulses boiled into a liquid form with salt and condiments, and even so streams of curds (as also of milk and ghee), and also silver plates in thousands brimful with delicious fruit juices of various kinds as well as with sweetmeats. (3-4) Fully entertained by Vasiṣṭha, O Rāma, the entire army of Viśwāmitra, wholly composed (as it was) of joyous and well-fed men, felt highly gratified. (5)

Entertained on that occasion along with the foremost inmates of his gynaeceum as well as with the Brahmans (that had accompanied him) including his family priest, and even so with his ministers and counsellors and dependents (too), King Viśwāmitra, a veritable sage among kings, felt rejoiced and strong. Full of supreme delight he spoke to Vasiṣṭha as follows :—(6-7) "I have been honoured and sumptuously entertaind by you (who are) deserving of honour (yourself), O holy one ! I shall (now) prefer a request (to you), O master of expression; (pray) listen ! (8) Śabalā may (kindly) be handed over to me in exchange for a hundred thousand cows, as she is a jewel and a king is the (proper) person who ought to receive a jewel. (9) Therefore, make over Śabalā to me; she is rightfully mine, O holy Brahman !" Thus addressed by Viśwāmitra, the almighty Vasiṣṭha, the foremost among ascetics, whose mind was given to piety, replied to the king (as follows) :—

नाहं शतसहस्रेण नापि कोटिशतैर्गवाम् ॥११॥
राजन् दास्यामि शबलां राशिभी रजतस्य वा । न परित्यागमर्हेयं मत्सकाशादरिंदम ॥१२॥
शाश्वती शबला मह्यं कीर्तिरात्मवतो यथा । अस्यां हव्यं च कव्यं च प्राणयात्रा तथैव च ॥१३॥
आयत्तमग्निहोत्रं च बलिर्होमस्तथैव च । स्वाहाकारवषट्कारौ विद्याश्च विविधास्तथा ॥१४॥
आयत्तमत्र राजर्षे सर्वमेतन्न संशयः । सर्वस्वमेतत् सत्येन मम तुष्टिकरी तथा ॥१५॥
कारणैर्बहुभी राजान् न दास्ये शबलां तव ।

"I shall never part with Śabalā even in exchange for a thousand million cows, much less for a hundred thousand, (nay) not (even) for heaps of silver (coins). She does not deserve to be weaned from my presence, O subduer of foes ! (10—12) Śabalā is inalienable from me (even) as glory is inalienable from a man practising Rājayoga (the methods of mind-coutrol). Moreover an offering made to the gods (in sacrifices) and that to the manes (in the course of a Śrāddha), as well as the sustenance of my life depends on her. Nay, Agnihotra (daily oblations to the sacred fire), as well as Bali (the offering of a portion of the daily meal to all creatures, also known as Bhūta-Yajña, which consists in throwing up into the air, near the house-door, morsels of food before taking one's meals), and even so Vaiśwadeva (an offering made to all deities by presenting oblations to the kitchen fire before meals), sacrifices (characterized by the repetition of the indeclinables Swāhā and Vaṣaṭ at the end of the name of the deity to whom an offering is made) and even so (the uttering of) the various Mantras (inasmuch as the capacity to utter them, rooted as it is in the satisfaction of hunger and bodily strength etc., is derived from the milk of this cow)—all this no doubt rests on this cow (alone), O royal sage ! She is my all as also the source of my delight (through her sight etc.), I say on oath. (13—15) For (these) numerous reasons I shall not give Śabalā to you."

वसिष्ठेनैवमुक्तस्तु विश्वामित्रोऽब्रवीत् तदा ॥१६॥
संरब्धतरमत्यर्थं वाक्यं वाक्यविशारदः । हैरण्यकक्ष्याग्रैवेयान् सुवर्णाङ्कुशभूषितान् ॥१७॥
ददामि कुञ्जराणां ते सहस्राणि चतुर्दश । हैरण्यानां रथानां च श्वेताश्वानां चतुर्युजाम् ॥१८॥
ददामि ते शतान्यष्टौ किङ्किणीकविभूषितान् । हयानां देशजातानां कुलजानां महौजसाम् ॥१९॥

सहस्रमेकं दश च ददामि तव सुव्रत ।
नानावर्णविभक्तानां वयःस्थानां तथैव च । ददाम्येकां गवां कोटिं शबला दीयतां मम ॥२०॥
यावदिच्छसि रत्नानि हिरण्यं वा द्विजोत्तम । तावद् ददामि ते सर्वं दीयतां शबला मम ॥२१॥
एवमुक्तस्तु भगवान् विश्वामित्रेण धीमता । न दास्यामीति शबलां प्राह राजन् कथंचन ॥२२॥
एतदेव हि मे रत्नमेतदेव हि मे धनम् । एतदेव हि सर्वस्वमेतदेव हि जीवितम् ॥२३॥
दर्शश्च पौर्णमासश्च यज्ञाश्चैवाप्तदक्षिणाः । एतदेव हि मे राजन् विविधाश्च क्रियास्तथा ॥२४॥
अतोमूलाः क्रियाः सर्वा मम राजन् न संशयः । बहुना किं प्रलापेन न दास्ये कामदोहिनीम् ॥२५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे त्रिपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५३ ॥

Thus addressed by Vasiṣṭha, Viśwāmitra, who was an expert in making out the meaning of words, then made the following reply in a really most importunate tone:—"I offer to you fourteen thousand elephants equipped with girths and chains of gold and decked with goads (also) of gold. I further offer to you eight hundred gold chariots driven by four white horses each and decorated with small (tinkling) bells. I shall (also) give you, O sage of noble vows, eleven thousand highly-spirited horses of excellent breed and born in territories noted for their horses. (Over and above these) I shall give you one crore of young cows distinguished by their different colours. (Only) let Śabalā be given (in exchange for these). (16—20) (Nay) I shall give you without reservation as many jewels and as much gold as you want, O jewel among the twice-born! Let Śabalā be given to me." (21) Even though solicited thus by the talented Viśwāmitra, the almighty Vasiṣṭha made (the same) answer: "I shall on no account part with Śabalā, O king! (22) She is indeed the only jewel in my possession; nay, she is my only wealth. She alone is really my everything; she alone is my very life. (23) She alone is my half-monthly sacrifice performed on the new moon as well as (its counterpart, *viz.*,) that performed on the full moon, (nay, all) sacrificial performances concluded with (abundant) gifts and even so ritual acts of various kinds, O king! (24) All my religious rites, no doubt, are rooted in her, O king! What is to be gained by prattling a good deal? (The long and short of it is that) I shall not part with Śabalā (who yields all my desired objects)." (25)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-three in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुःपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LIV

On Viśwāmitra attempting to take her away by force, Śabalā seeks to know Vasiṣṭha's mind, and at his instance produces a multitude of warriors that disperse Viśwāmitra's army.

कामधेनुं वसिष्ठोऽपि यदा न त्यजते मुनिः । तदास्य शबलां राम विश्वामित्रोऽन्वकर्षत ॥ १ ॥
नीयमाना तु शबला राम राज्ञा महात्मना । दुःखिता चिन्तयामास रुदन्ती शोककर्शिता ॥ २ ॥
परित्यक्ता वसिष्ठेन किमहं सुमहात्मना । याहं राजभृतैर्दीना ह्रियेयं भृशदुःखिता ॥ ३ ॥

किं मयापकृतं तस्य महर्षेर्भावितात्मनः । यन्मामनागसं दृष्ट्वा भक्तां त्यजति धार्मिकः ॥ ४ ॥
इति संचिन्तयित्वा तु निःश्वस्य च पुनः पुनः । जगाम वेगेन तदा वसिष्ठं परमौजसम् ॥ ५ ॥
निर्धूय तांस्तदा भृत्याञ्शतशः शत्रुसूदन । जगामानिलवेगेन पादमूलं महात्मनः ॥ ६ ॥
शबला सा रुदन्ती च क्रोशन्ती चेदमब्रवीत् । वसिष्ठस्याग्रतः स्थित्वा रुदन्ती मेघनिःस्वना ॥ ७ ॥
भगवन् किं परित्यक्ता त्वयाहं ब्रह्मणः सुत । यस्माद् राजभटा मां हि नयन्ते त्वत्सकाशतः ॥ ८ ॥
एवमुक्तस्तु ब्रह्मर्षिरिदं वचनमब्रवीत् । शोकसंतप्तहृदयां स्वसारमिव दुःखिताम् ॥ ९ ॥

When Sage Vasiṣṭha did not (willingly) part with his wish-yielding cow, O Rāma, Viśwāmitra too thereupon proceeded to take Śabalā away by force (to his capital). (1) Being taken away (by force) by the mighty king, Śabalā for her part felt afflicted and, distracted with grief, fell a weeping. She reflected, "Have I been deserted by the exceptionally high-souled Vasiṣṭha, in that I am being taken away in this wretched condition by the king's retainers, sore distressed as I am? (2-3) What wrong has been done by me to that eminent seer of purified mind that, even though perceiving me to be innocent and devoted (to him) the pious soul should abandon me?" (4) Deeply pondering thus and sighing again and again, she for her part forthwith ran to the supremely powerful Vasiṣṭha. (5) Shaking off the aforesaid retainers numbering many hundred, O destroyer of foes, she at once ran swift as the wind to the soles of feet of that exalted soul. (6) Standing before Vasiṣṭha while shedding tears, the celebrated Śabalā submitted (to him) as follows in a voice sonorous as the rumbling of a cloud, weeping and wailing (all the time):—(7) "Have I been forsaken by you, O almighty son of Brahmā, in that the king's servants are actually taking me away from your presence?" (8) Questioned thus (by the cow), Vasistha (the Brahman seer) for his part replied as follows to Śabalā, whose heart was tormented with grief, as to an afflicted sister:—(9)

न त्वां त्यजामि शबले नापि मेऽपकृतं त्वया । एष त्वां नयते राजा बलान्मत्तो महाबलः ॥१०॥
नहि तुल्यं बलं मह्यं राजा त्वद्य विशेषतः । बली राजा क्षत्रियश्च पृथिव्याः पतिरेव च ॥११॥
इयमक्षौहिणी पूर्णा गजवाजिरथाकुला । हस्तिध्वजसमाकीर्णा तेनासौ बलवत्तरः ॥१२॥
एवमुक्ता वसिष्ठेन प्रत्युवाच विनीतवत् । वचनं वचनज्ञा सा ब्रह्मर्षिमतुलप्रभम् ॥१३॥
न बलं क्षत्रियस्याहुर्ब्राह्मणा बलवत्तराः । ब्रह्मन् ब्रह्मबलं दिव्यं क्षात्राच्च बलवत्तरम् ॥१४॥
अप्रमेयं बलं तुभ्यं न त्वया बलवत्तरः । विश्वामित्रो महावीर्यस्तेजस्तव दुरासदम् ॥१५॥
नियुङ्क्ष्व मां महातेजस्त्वं ब्रह्मबलसम्भृताम् । तस्य दर्पं बलं यत्नं नाशयामि दुरात्मनः ॥१६॥
इत्युक्तस्तु तदा राम वसिष्ठस्तु महायशाः । सृजस्वेति तदोवाच बलं परबलार्दनम् ॥१७॥

"I am not abandoning you, O Śabalā, nor have you wronged me. Intoxicated with power, this very mighty king is taking you away. (10) My strength is not equal to his; nay, (being my honoured guest) the king is particularly strong today. The king (Viśwāmitra) is a Kṣatriya and the ruler of the earth to boot. (11) Here is his army, full one Akṣauhiṇī strong, equipped with elephants, horses and chariots and crowded with the best of elephants. In that respect he is mightier (than us)." (12) Thus addressed by Vasiṣṭha, Śabalā, who correctly understood the sense of others' speech, replied as follows, like a meek lady, to the Brahman seer of matchless splendour:—(13) "The wise declare the strength of a Kṣatriya as nought (as compared to that of a Brahman); Brahmaṇs are (decidedly) stronger (than the Kṣatriyas). The strength of a Brahman, O holy one, is spiritual and (as such) is superior to that of a Kṣatriya. (14) Your strength is immeasurable; though very powerful. Viśwāmitra is not stronger in comparison with you. Your glory is unassailable. (15) Command you me, who, fostered (as I am) by your Brahmanical (spiritual) strength, O exceptionally glorious sage, shall put an end to the pride, strength and endeavour of that wretch (of a Viśwāmitra)." (16) Urged as aforesaid by her, O Rāma, the illustrious Vasiṣṭha for his part forthwith said, "Create a force capable of destroying the enemy's army." (17)

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा सुरभिः सासृजत् तदा । तस्या हुम्भारवोत्सृष्टाः पह्लवाः शतशो नृप ॥१८॥
नाशयन्ति बलं सर्वं विश्वामित्रस्य पश्यतः । स राजा परमक्रुद्धः क्रोधविस्फारितेक्षणः ॥१९॥
पह्लवान् नाशयामास शस्त्रैरुच्चावचैरपि । विश्वामित्रार्दितान् दृष्ट्वा पह्लवाञ्शतशस्तदा ॥२०॥
भूय एवासृजद् घोराञ्छकान् यवनमिश्रितान् । तैरासीत् संवृता भूमिः शकैर्यवनमिश्रितैः ॥२१॥
प्रभावद्भिर्महावीर्यैर्हेमकिंजल्कसंनिभैः । तीक्ष्णासिपट्टिशधरैर्हेमवर्णाम्बरावृतैः ॥२२॥
निर्दग्धं तद्बलं सर्वं प्रदीप्तैरिव पावकैः ।
ततोऽस्त्राणि महातेजा विश्वामित्रो मुमोच ह । तैस्ते यवनकाम्बोजा बर्बराश्चाकुलीकृताः ॥२३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे चतुःपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५४ ॥

Hearing the aforesaid command of Sage Vasiṣṭha, the said wish-yielding cow forthwith produced a number of warriors. Created by her (very) bellow, O king, Pahlavas in their hundreds began to destroy the whole army under the (very) eye of Viśwāmitra. Highly enraged and with his eyes dilated through anger, King Viśwāmitra too made short work of the Pahlavas by means of his weapons of various kinds. Seeing the Pahlavas killed in their hundreds by Viśwāmitra, Śabalā immediately produced next the terrible Śakas, (who were) akin to the Yavanas. The land was flooded with these brilliant and most powerful Śakas, that were akin to the Yavanas, resembled the filaments of the Champaka flowers in colour, carried sharp-edged swords and Paṭṭiśas (a kind of spear) on their person and were clad in yellow. (18—22) The entire army of Viśwāmitra was consumed by them as by blazing fires. Thereupon, it is said, the highly glorious Viśwāmitra discharged (a number of) missiles, by them those Yavanas and Kāmbojas (another species of Mlechchhas) as well as the Barbaras (still another species of Mlechchhas) were thrown into confusion. (23)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-four in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LV

His entire army having been exterminated by the warriors produced by Śabalā and his hundred sons reduced to ashes by the very roar of Vasiṣṭha even as they assailed him, Viśwāmitra retires to the Himalayas for austerities and, receiving a number of missiles from Lord Śiva, tries them on the inmates of Vasiṣṭha's hermitage; Vasiṣṭha meets him with a mere staff appropriate to a Brahman.

ततस्तानाकुलान् दृष्ट्वा विश्वामित्रास्त्रमोहितान् । वसिष्ठश्चोदयामास कामधुक् सृज योगतः ॥ १ ॥

तस्या हुकारतो जाताः काम्बोजा रविसंनिभाः । ऊधसश्चाथ सम्भूता बर्बराः शस्त्रपाणयः ॥ २ ॥
योनिदेशाच्च यवनाः शकृद्देशाच्छकाः स्मृताः । रोमकूपेषु म्लेच्छाश्च हारीताः सकिरातकाः ॥ ३ ॥
तैस्तन्निषूदितं सर्वं विश्वामित्रस्य तत्क्षणात् । सपदातिगजं साश्वं सरथं रघुनन्दन ॥ ४ ॥
दृष्ट्वा निषूदितं सैन्यं वसिष्ठेन महात्मना । विश्वामित्रसुतानां तु शतं नानाविधायुधम् ॥ ५ ॥
अभ्यधावत् सुसंक्रुद्धं वसिष्ठं जपतां वरम् । हुंकारेणैव तान् सर्वान् निर्ददाह महानृषिः ॥ ६ ॥
ते साश्वरथपादाता वसिष्ठेन महात्मना । भस्मीकृता मुहूर्तेन विश्वामित्रसुतास्तथा ॥ ७ ॥

Seeing the warriors created by Śabalā stupefied by the missiles of Viśwāmitra and fleeing (from the battle-field) helter-skelter, Vasiṣṭha commanded Śabalā (as follows):—"Evolve more warriors, O wish-yielding cow, by dint of your yogic power (power of concentration)." (1) From her roar sprang up the Kāmbojas, brilliant as the sun. And, again, from her udders were produced the Barbaras carrying weapons in their hands. (2) From her genitals came forth the Yavanas; (while) those that issued from her anus were known as the Śakas. From the pores of her skin originated the Mlechchhas and the Hārītas along with the Kirātas. (3) By them was wiped out instantly the entire army of Viśwāmitra including the foot soldiers and elephants, horses and chariots, O scion of Raghu! (4) Seeing the army (of their father) exterminated by the mighty Vasiṣṭha, Viśwāmitra's hundred sons rushed most furiously towards Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of ascetics, carrying weapons of various kinds. The great Ṛṣi (Vasiṣṭha), however, reduced them all to ashes by his very roar. (5-6) The sons of Viśwāmitra were reduced to ashes in an instant with their horses, chariots and foot soldiers by the mighty Vasiṣṭha. (7)

दृष्ट्वा विनाशितान् सर्वान् बलं च सुमहायशाः । सव्रीडं चिन्तयाऽऽविष्टो विश्वामित्रोऽभवत् तदा ॥ ८ ॥
समुद्र इव निर्वेगो भग्नदंष्ट्र इवोरगः । उपरक्त इवादित्यः सद्यो निष्प्रभतां गतः ॥ ९ ॥
हतपुत्रबलो दीनो लूनपक्ष इव द्विजः । हतसर्वबलोत्साहो निर्वेदं समपद्यत ॥ १० ॥
स पुत्रमेकं राज्याय पालयेति नियुज्य च । पृथिवीं क्षत्रधर्मेण वनमेवाभ्यपद्यत ॥ ११ ॥
स गत्वा हिमवत्पार्श्वं किंनरोरगसेवितम् । महादेवप्रसादार्थं तपस्तेपे महातपाः ॥ १२ ॥
केनचित् त्वथ कालेन देवेशो वृषभध्वजः । दर्शयामास वरदो विश्वामित्रं महामुनिम् ॥ १३ ॥
किमर्थं तप्यसे राजन् ब्रूहि यत् ते विवक्षितम् । वरदोऽस्मि वरो यस्ते काङ्क्षितः सोऽभिधीयताम् ॥ १४ ॥

Seeing them all as well as his army annihilated the exceptionally illustrious Viśwāmitra was forthwith filled with anxiety mixed with shame. (8) He resembled the ocean that has lost its fury and the snake whose fangs have been broken, and suddenly became lustreless like the eclipsed sun. (9) Having lost his sons and army, he felt miserable like a bird whose wings have been clipped. (Nay) with all his strength and spirit shattered, he reached a state of despondency. (10) Nay, enjoining his only (surviving) son in the words "Rule the earth according to the moral code prescribed for a Kṣatriya in order to carry on the administration", he retired to the woods alone. (11) Repairing to a slope of the Himalayas, resorted to by Kinnaras and Nāgas, Viśwāmitra (who had now turned a great ascetic) practised austerities for the pleasure of Lord Śiva (the Supreme Deity). (12) Some time later Lord Śiva (whose ensign bears the emblem of a bull), the paramount Ruler of gods and the Bestower of boons, actually revealed Himself before the great sage Viśwāmitra (and said :—) (13) "Wherefore do you praçtise austerities, O king ? Speak out what is there in your mind. I am the Bestower of boons. The boon which is sought by you may be made known (to Me)." (14)

एवमुक्तस्तु देवेन विश्वामित्रो महातपाः । प्रणिपत्य महादेवं विश्वामित्रोऽब्रवीदिदम् ॥१५॥
यदि तुष्टो महादेव धनुर्वेदो ममानघ । साङ्गोपाङ्गोपनिषदः सरहस्यः प्रदीयताम् ॥१६॥
यानि देवेषु चास्त्राणि दानवेषु महर्षिषु । गन्धर्वयक्षरक्षस्सु प्रतिभान्तु ममानघ ॥१७॥
तव प्रसादाद् भवतु देवदेव ममेप्सितम् । एवमस्त्विति देवेशो वाक्यमुक्त्वा गतस्तदा ॥१८॥

When the great ascetic Viśwāmitra was told thus by the Lord, the former replied to him as follows, falling prostrate before Him :—(15) "If You are pleased (with me), O Supreme Deity, the science of archery with its inmost secrets and including the branches of knowledge directly or distantly auxiliary to it as also the sacred texts (forming part of it) may (kindly) be revealed to me, O sinless One ! (16) Let all the mystic missiles that are known to gods, demons and great seers as well as to Gandharvas, Yakṣas and ogres flash before my mind's eye, O sinless One ! (17) Let the consummation sought by me be achieved by Your grace, O god of gods !" Uttering the words "Let it be so," Lord Śiva (the Supreme Ruler of gods) forthwith departed. (18)

प्राप्य चास्त्राणि देवेशाद् विश्वामित्रो महाबलः । दर्पेण महता युक्तो दर्पपूर्णोऽभवत् तदा ॥१९॥
विवर्धमानो वीर्येण समुद्र इव पर्वणि । हतं मेने तदा राम वसिष्ठमृषिसत्तमम् ॥२०॥
ततो गत्वाऽऽश्रमपदं मुमोचास्त्राणि पार्थिवः । यैस्तत् तपोवनं नाम निर्दग्धं चास्त्रतेजसा ॥२१॥

Receiving the mystic missiles and weapons from Lord Śiva (the paramount Ruler of gods), the very mighty Viśwāmitra, who was (already) full of great pride, was now puffed up with arrogance; and swelling with power as the ocean on the full moon he took Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of seers, to be dead at that moment, O Rāma. (19-20) Proceeding to the site of the hermitage, the king then discharged (mystic) missiles and weapons, by which the said grove in which austerities were being practised began to be consumed through the fire of the missiles. (21)

उदीर्यमाणमस्त्रं तद् विश्वामित्रस्य धीमतः । दृष्ट्वा विप्रद्रुता भीता मुनयः शतशो दिशः ॥२२॥
वसिष्ठस्य च ये शिष्या ये च वै मृगपक्षिणः । विद्रवन्ति भयाद् भीता नानादिग्भ्यः सहस्रशः ॥२३॥
वसिष्ठस्याश्रमपदं शून्यमासीन्महात्मनः । मुहूर्तमिव निश्शब्दमासीदीरिणसंनिभम् ॥२४॥
वदतो वै वसिष्ठस्य मा भैरिति मुहुर्मुहुः । नाशयाम्यद्य गाधेयं नीहारमिव भास्करः ॥२५॥
एवमुक्त्वा महातेजा वसिष्ठो जपतां वरः । विश्वामित्रं तदा वाक्यं सरोषमिदमब्रवीत् ॥२६॥
आश्रमं चिरसंवृद्धं यद् विनाशितवानसि । दुराचारो हि यन्मूढस्तस्मात् त्वं न भविष्यसि ॥२७॥
इत्युक्त्वा परमक्रुद्धो दण्डमुद्यम्य सत्वरः । विधूम इव कालाग्निर्यमदण्डमिवापरम् ॥२८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे पञ्चपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५५ ॥

Alarmed to see those missiles being discharged by the talented Viśwāmitra, the hermits escaped in their hundreds in various directions. (22) Afraid of the danger, whatever pupils of Vasiṣṭha and whatever beasts or birds there were (in his hermitage) fled in their thousands from the various quarters. (23) The site of the hermitage of the mighty Vasiṣṭha turned desolate. In an hour or so it became noiseless and looked barren as it were in spite of Vasiṣṭha repeatedly calling out:—"Don't be afraid, I shall presently make short work of Viśwāmitra (the son of Gādhi) as the sun dispels a fog." (24-25) Saying so, the exceptionally glorious Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of ascetics, then angrily addressed the following words to Viśwāmitra:—(26) "Since you have made havoc of my hermitage, fostered for long, and inasmuch as you are a wicked fool, you will cease to be (what you are)." (27) Saying so and hurriedly lifting a staff, which looked like another rod of Yama, Vasiṣṭha stood highly enraged like the smokeless fire raging at the time of universal destruction. (28)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-five in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षट्पञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LVI

With his Brahmanical staff alone Vasiṣṭha renders ineffectual all the mystic missiles discharged by Viśwāmitra, whereupon the latter condemns military strength and makes up his mind to practise austerities with a view to attaining Brahmanhood.

एवमुक्तो वसिष्ठेन विश्वामित्रो महाबलः । आग्नेयमस्त्रमुद्दिश्य तिष्ठ तिष्ठेति चाब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
ब्रह्मदण्डं समुद्यम्य कालदण्डमिवापरम् । वसिष्ठो भगवान् क्रोधादिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥
क्षत्रबन्धो स्थितोऽस्म्येष यद् बलं तद् विदर्शय । नाशयाम्यद्य ते दर्पं शस्त्रस्य तव गाधिज ॥ ३ ॥
क्व च ते क्षत्रियबलं क्व च ब्रह्मबलं महत् । पश्य ब्रह्मबलं दिव्यं मम क्षत्रियपांसन ॥ ४ ॥
तस्यास्त्रं गाधिपुत्रस्य घोरमाग्नेयमुत्तमम् । ब्रह्मदण्डेन तच्छान्तमग्नेर्वेग इवाम्भसा ॥ ५ ॥
वारुणं चैव रौद्रं च ऐन्द्रं पाशुपतं तथा । ऐषीकं चापि चिक्षेप कुपितो गाधिनन्दनः ॥ ६ ॥

Aiming a missile presided over by the god of fire, when challenged as aforesaid by Vasiṣṭha, the very mighty Viśwāmitra said, "Stay (awhile)! Wait (a bit)!!" (1) Steadily uplifting his Brahmanical staff, which looked like another rod of Yama, the almighty Vasiṣṭha angrily spoke as follows:—(2) "Here I stand, O unworthy Kṣatriya! (Pray) exhibit whatever might you possess; I shall crush your pride as well as the pride of your weapon today, O son of Gādhi! (3) Of what account is your martial strength when compared to the great power of a Brahman? Behold my divine Brahmanical power, O disgrace to the Kṣatriyas!" (4) That terrible and excellent missile presided over by the god of fire and hurled by the celebrated son of Gādhi was neutralized by the Brahmanical staff (of Vasiṣṭha) as the fury of a fire is counteracted by water. (5) The enraged son of Gādhi discharged a missile presided over by Varuṇa (the god of water) as well as another presided over by Rudra (the god of destruction), nay, a third presided over by Indra (the ruler of gods) and a fourth presided over by Lord Śiva (the Protector of the Jīva, which has been likened to a beast because of its bondage) as also the one made of a reed. (6)

मानवं मोहनं चैव गान्धर्वं स्वापनं तथा । जृम्भणं मादनं चैव संतापनविलापने ॥ ७ ॥
शोषणं दारणं चैव वज्रमस्त्रं सुदुर्जयम् । ब्रह्मपाशं कालपाशं वारुणं पाशमेव च ॥ ८ ॥
पिनाकमस्त्रं दयितं शुष्कार्द्रे अशनी तथा । दण्डास्त्रमथ पैशाचं क्रौञ्चमस्त्रं तथैव च ॥ ९ ॥
धर्मचक्रं कालचक्रं विष्णुचक्रं तथैव च । वायव्यं मथनं चैव अस्त्रं हयशिरस्तथा ॥१०॥
शक्तिद्वयं च चिक्षेप कङ्कालं मुसलं तथा । वैद्याधरं महास्त्रं च कालास्त्रमथ दारुणम् ॥११॥
त्रिशूलमस्त्रं घोरं च कापालमथ कङ्कणम् । एतान्यस्त्राणि चिक्षेप सर्वाणि रघुनन्दन ॥१२॥
वसिष्ठे जपतां श्रेष्ठे तदद्भुतमिवाभवत् । तानि सर्वाणि दण्डेन ग्रसते ब्रह्मणः सुतः ॥१३॥

He (then) hurled, O scion of Raghu, at Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of ascetics, all the following missiles—the one presided over by Swāyambhuva Manu, as also another possessing the virtue of stupefying the person aimed at, another presided over by Gandharvas, even so a missile inducing sleep, another that induces yawning, still another that inebriates the person against whom it is directed, as well as a couple of missiles that severally torment by heating and melt the object aimed at, still another that dries up (by sucking its moisture), as well as a missile that rends the object aimed at, a missile presided over by Indra's thunderbolt,—a missile which is so very difficult to prevail against,—a missile presided over by Brahmā's noose, another presided over by the noose of Kāla (the god of death), as well as a missile presided over by the noose of Varuṇa, the missile known by the name of Pināka, beloved of Lord Śiva, also the two (kinds of Indra's) thunderbolts, dry as well as wet, a missile presided over by Yama (the god of punishment), another presided over by Piśāchas (fiends) as well as a missile presided over by Krauñcha (the name of a mountain), the missiles presided over by the discuses of Dharma (the god of virtue), Kāla (the Time-Spirit), as well as of Viṣṇu, as also a missile presided over by the wind-god, another that kills by churning, and the one presided over by Lord Hayagrīva (a manifestation of Lord Viṣṇu credited with the head of a horse), the two (kinds of) javelins, the missiles known by the names of Kañkāla and Musala, the great missile presided over by Vidyādharas (heavenly artistes) and then the terrible missile presided over by Kāla (the god of death), nay, the fearful missile (popularly) known as the trident and the missiles known by the names of Kapāla and Kañkaṇa. The wonder of it (however) was that Vasiṣṭha (a son of Brahmā) neutralized them all by means of his staff (alone). (7—13.)

तेषु शान्तेषु ब्रह्मास्त्रं क्षिप्तवान् गाधिनन्दनः । तदस्त्रमुद्यतं दृष्ट्वा देवाः साग्निपुरोगमाः ॥१४॥
देवर्षयश्च सम्भ्रान्ता गन्धर्वाः समहोरगाः । त्रैलोक्यमासीत् संत्रस्तं ब्रह्मास्त्रे समुदीरिते ॥१५॥
तदप्यस्त्रं महाघोरं ब्राह्मं ब्राह्मेण तेजसा । वसिष्ठो ग्रसते सर्वं ब्रह्मदण्डेन राघव ॥१६॥
ब्रह्मास्त्रं ग्रसमानस्य वसिष्ठस्य महात्मनः । त्रैलोक्यमोहनं रौद्रं रूपमासीत् सुदारुणम् ॥१७॥
रोमकूपेषु सर्वेषु वसिष्ठस्य महात्मनः । मरीच्य इव निष्पेतुरग्नेर्धूमाकुलार्चिषः ॥१८॥
प्राज्वलद् ब्रह्मदण्डश्च वसिष्ठस्य करोद्यतः । विधूम इव कालाग्निर्यमदण्ड इवापरः ॥१९॥

The aforesaid missiles having been rendered ineffectual, Viśwāmitra (son of Gādhi) discharged Brahmāstra (a missile presided over by Brahmā, the creator). The gods with the god of fire as their leader, the celestial sages and Gandharvas along with eminent Nāgas were struck with awe to see that missile ready (for being hurled). (Nay) all the three worlds were alarmed when the said missile presided over by Brahmā was fully discharged. (14-15) Vasiṣṭha (however) neutralized even that exceptionally terrible Brahmāstra in its entirety (including all its limbs) by his Brahmanical staff combined with the Brahmanical (spiritual) glory, O scion of Raghu ! (16) While the mighty Vasiṣṭha was consuming the Brahmāstra, he assumed a most violent and fierce aspect that stupefied all the three worlds. (17) From all the pores of skin of the high-souled Vasiṣṭha shot forth like (as many) rays tongues of fire enveloped in smoke (the smoke issuing from the extinguished Brahmāstra). (18) Even the Brahmanical staff raised in the hand of Vasiṣṭha blazed forth like the smokeless fire of universal destruction or like a second rod of Yama (the god of punishment). (19)

ततोऽस्तुवन् मुनिगणा वसिष्ठं जपतां वरम् । अमोघं ते बलं ब्रह्मंस्तेजो धारय तेजसा ॥२०॥
निगृहीतस्त्वया ब्रह्मन् विश्वामित्रो महाबलः । अमोघं ते बलं श्रेष्ठ लोकाः सन्तु गतव्यथाः ॥२१॥
एवमुक्तो महातेजाः शमं चक्रे महाबलः । विश्वामित्रो विनिकृतो विनिःश्वस्येदमब्रवीत् ॥२२॥
धिग् बलं क्षत्रियबलं ब्रह्मतेजोबलं बलम् । एकेन ब्रह्मदण्डेन सर्वास्त्राणि हतानि मे ॥२३॥
तदेतत् प्रसमीक्ष्याहं प्रसन्नेन्द्रियमानसः । तपो महत् समास्थास्ये यद् वै ब्रह्मत्वकारणम् ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे षट्पञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५६ ॥

Thereupon hosts of sages glorified (as follows) Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of ascetics:—"Unfailing is your might, O holy one ! Quench the fire (of your person as well as of the Brahmanical staff) by your own glory. (20) The very mighty Viśwāmitra has been tamed by you, O holy Brahman ! Your power knows no failure, O noblest soul ! Let the worlds be rid of their agony." (21) Prayed to in these words, the exceptionally glorious and mighty Vasiṣṭha regained his natural) calm; and, heaving a deep sigh, the worsted Viśwāmitra spoke as follows:—(22) "Reproachful is the might of a Kṣatriya. The strength proceeding from the glory of a Brahman is (real) strength. All my missiles stand neutralized by a single Brahmanical staff." (23) Clearly perceiving this (superiority of Brahmanical glory), therefore, I shall with my senses and mind purified undertake severe austerities that will enable me to attain Brahmanhood (in this very life)." (24)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-six in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

सप्तपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LVII

Viśwāmitra embarks on a severe course of austerities with a view to attaining Brahmanhood. In the meantime King Triśanku of Ayodhya requests Vasiṣṭha to conduct for him a sacrifice which may enable him bodily to ascend to heaven and, on Vasiṣṭha declining to comply with his request, approaches his sons for the same purpose.

ततः संतप्तहृदयः स्मरन् निग्रहमात्मनः । विनिःश्वस्य विनिःश्वस्य कृतवैरो महात्मना ॥ १ ॥
स दक्षिणां दिशं गत्वा महिष्या सह राघव । ततापं परमं घोरं विश्वामित्रो महातपाः ॥ २ ॥
फलमूलाशनो दान्तश्चचार परमं तपः । अथास्य जज्ञिरे पुत्राः सत्यधर्मपरायणाः ॥ ३ ॥
हविष्पन्दो मधुष्पन्दो दृढनेत्रो महारथः । पूर्णे वर्षसहस्रे तु ब्रह्मा लोकपितामहः ॥ ४ ॥
अब्रवीन्मधुरं वाक्यं विश्वामित्रं तपोधनम् । जिता राजर्षिलोकास्ते तपसा कुशिकात्मज ॥ ५ ॥
अनेन तपसा त्वां हि राजर्षिरिति विद्महे । एवमुक्त्वा महातेजा जगाम सह दैवतैः ॥ ६ ॥
त्रिविष्टपं ब्रह्मलोकं लोकानां परमेश्वरः ।

Sighing deeply again and again, his heart being distressed at the thought of his discomfiture (at the hands of Vasiṣṭha), the celebrated Viśwāmitra, who had made enemies with an exalted soul (like Vasiṣṭha) then proceeded to the southern quarter with his principal queen and embarked as a great ascetic on (a course of) most severe austerities, O scion of Raghu ! (1-2) Living on fruits and roots (alone) and with his mind and senses (fully) controlled, he practised austerities of a high order. Immediately after his commencing the course of his austerities were born to him four sons devoted to truthfulness and virtue—Haviṣpanda, Madhuṣpanda, Dṛḍhanetra and Mahāratha (by name). On the completion of a thousand years Brahmā (the progenitor of the universe) actually appeared and addressed the following sweet words to Viśwāmitra, who was rich in asceticism :—"The worlds attained to by royal sages have been won by you through askesis, O son of Kuśika (Gādhi) ! (3—5) Through this askesis we undoubtedly recognize you as a royal sage." Saying so, the exceptionally glorious Brahmā (the suzerain lord of all the worlds) returned along with the gods (that had accompanied him) to paradise (Indra's heaven) *en route* to Brahmaloka (the highest heaven, his own realm).

विश्वामित्रोऽपि तच्छ्रुत्वा ह्रिया किंचिदवाङ्मुखः ॥ ७ ॥
दुःखेन महताऽऽविष्टः समन्युरिदमब्रवीत् । तपश्च सुमहत् तप्तं राजर्षिरिति मां विदुः ॥ ८ ॥
देवाः सर्षिगणाः सर्वे नास्ति मन्ये तपःफलम् । एवं निश्चित्य मनसा भूय एव महातपाः ॥ ९ ॥
तपश्चचार धर्मात्मा काकुत्स्थ परमात्मवान् ।

Filled with great agony to hear the aforesaid compliment and with his face hung downward a bit through shame, Viśwāmitra too spoke (to himself) in a mood of dejection as follows:—"Even though most severe austerities have been practised (by me), all the gods including the hosts of Ṛṣis recognize me (only) as a royal sage (and not as a Brahman as desired by me). I (therefore) think that Brahmanhood is not the reward for my austerities (something more is required for attaining the status of a Brahman)." Having concluded thus in his mind, the great ascetic (Viśwāmitra), whose mind was given to piety, O scion of Kakutstha, and who was of great restraint, commenced his austerities anew.

एतस्मिन्नेव काले तु सत्यवादी जितेन्द्रियः ॥१०॥
त्रिशङ्कुरिति विख्यात इक्ष्वाकुकुलवर्धनः । तस्य बुद्धिः समुत्पन्ना यजेयमिति राघव ॥११॥
गच्छेयं स्वशरीरेण देवतानां परां गतिम् । वसिष्ठं स समाहूय कथयामास चिन्तितम् ॥१२॥
अशक्यमिति चाप्युक्तो वसिष्ठेन महात्मना । प्रत्याख्यातो वसिष्ठेन स ययौ दक्षिणां दिशम् ॥१३॥
ततस्तत्कर्मसिद्ध्यर्थं पुत्रांस्तस्य गतो नृपः । वासिष्ठा दीर्घतपसस्तपो यत्र हि तेपिरे ॥१४॥
त्रिशङ्कुस्तु महातेजाः शतं परमभास्वरम् । वसिष्ठपुत्रान् ददृशे तप्यमानान् मनस्विनः ॥१५॥
सोऽभिगम्य महात्मानः सर्वानेव गुरोः सुतान् । अभिवाद्यानुपूर्वेण ह्रिया किंचिदवाङ्मुखः ॥१६॥
अब्रवीत् स महात्मानः सर्वानेव कृताञ्जलिः ।

At this very time a king who heightened the glory of Ikṣwāku's race and was widely known by the name of Triśanku, nay, who (ever) spoke the truth and had (fully) controlled his senses, took it into his head, O scion of Raghu, to undertake a sacrifice and (thereby) ascend bodily to paradise (the highest realm of gods). Summoning Vasiṣṭha, he revealed his mind to him. (6—12) He was, however, told by the mighty Vasiṣṭha that it was not possible to conduct such a sacrifice. Repulsed by Vasiṣṭha, he proceeded to the southern quarter. (13) For the accomplishment of the said purpose the king then sought Vasiṣṭha's sons at the place where they were actually leading an austere life, engaged as they were in a prolonged course of austerities. (14) The exceptionally glorious Triśanku beheld (from a distance) the hundred high-minded and supremely resplendent sons of Vasiṣṭha practising austerities. (15) Approaching and greeting in order of seniority all the high-souled sons of Vasiṣṭha (his family preceptor) with his face hung downward a bit through shame (on his having been repulsed by his preceptor), he submitted with joined palms to all those exalted souls (as follows) :—

शरणं वः प्रपन्नोऽहं शरण्याञ्शरणं गतः ॥१७॥
प्रत्याख्यातो हि भद्रं वो वसिष्ठेन महात्मना । यष्टुकामो महायशं तदनुज्ञातुमर्हथ ॥१८॥
गुरुपुत्रानहं सर्वान् नमस्कृत्य प्रसादये । शिरसा प्रणतो याचे ब्राह्मणांस्तपसि स्थितान् ॥१९॥
ते मां भवन्तः सिद्ध्यर्थं याजयन्तु समाहिताः । सशरीरो यथाहं वै देवलोकमवाप्नुयाम् ॥२०॥
प्रत्याख्यातो वसिष्ठेन गतिमन्यां तपोधनाः । गुरुपुत्रानृते सर्वान् नाहं पश्यामि कांचन ॥२१॥
इक्ष्वाकूणां हि सर्वेषां पुरोधाः परमा गतिः । तस्मादनन्तरं सर्वे भवन्तो दैवतं मम ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे सप्तपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५७ ॥

"Though resorted to by others as a protector, I have sought you as my refuge, capable as you are of affording protection to others. (16-17) May God bless you ! Though repulsed by the high-souled Vasiṣṭha (your father), I am (still) desirous of performing a great sacrifice (with the object of bodily ascending to heaven). Be pleased (therefore) to grant me leave (to do so). (18) Saluting all my preceptor's sons I (hereby) seek your favour and, fallen prostrate touching the ground with my head, I implore the Brahmans (in your person) devoted to austerities. (19) As such may you help me with a concentrated mind in performing a sacrifice for the accomplishment of my purpose so that I may attain to the realm of gods in my embodied state. (20) Having been repulsed by Vasiṣṭha, O sages rich in asceticism, I do not find any resort other than you all, the sons of my preceptor. (21) The family priest (in the person of Vasiṣṭha) indeed has been the supreme resort to all the scions of Ikṣwāku. Next to him you all are a deity to me." (22)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-seven in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LVIII

Having been repulsed by Vasiṣṭha's sons as well, Triśanku gets ready to seek another priest, whereupon he is degraded by the curse of Vasiṣṭha's sons to the position of a Chaṇḍāla and approaches Viśwāmitra with the same request.

ततस्त्रिशङ्कोर्वचनं श्रुत्वा क्रोधसमन्वितम् । ऋषिपुत्रशतं राम राजानमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
प्रत्याख्यातोऽसि दुर्मेधो गुरुणा सत्यवादिना । तं कथं समतिक्रम्य शाखान्तरमुपेयिवान् ॥ २ ॥
इक्ष्वाकूणां हि सर्वेषां पुरोधाः परमा गतिः । न चातिक्रमितुं शक्यं वचनं सत्यवादिनः ॥ ३ ॥
अशक्यमिति सोवाच वसिष्ठो भगवानृषिः । तं वयं वै समाहर्तुं क्रतुं शक्ताः कथंचन ॥ ४ ॥
बालिशस्त्वं नरश्रेष्ठ गम्यतां स्वपुरं पुनः । याजने भगवाञ्शक्तस्त्रैलोक्यस्यापि पार्थिव ॥ ५ ॥
अवमानं कथं कर्तुं तस्य शक्ष्यामहे वयम् । तेषां तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा क्रोधपर्याकुलाक्षरम् ॥ ६ ॥
स राजा पुनरेवैतानिदं वचनमब्रवीत् । प्रत्याख्यातो भगवता गुरुपुत्रैस्तथैव हि ॥ ७ ॥
अन्यां गतिं गमिष्यामि स्वस्ति वोऽस्तु तपोधनाः । ऋषिपुत्रास्तु तच्छ्रुत्वा वाक्यं घोराभिसंहितम् ॥ ८ ॥
शेपुः परमसंक्रुद्धाश्चण्डालत्वं गमिष्यसि । इत्युक्त्वा ते महात्मानो विविशुः स्वं स्वमाश्रमम् ॥ ९ ॥

Filled with rage to hear the submission of Triśanku, O Rāma, the hundred sons of sage Vasiṣṭha forthwith replied to the king as follows:— (1) "When you have been repulsed by your preceptor (Sage Vasiṣṭha), who (always) speaks the truth, O foolish king, how have you sought another patron, ignoring him ? (2) The family priest (Sage Vasiṣṭha) has been the greatest support of all the scions of Ikṣwāku and the word of that veracious sage cannot be set aside (with impunity). (3) How can we really venture to conduct a sacrifice which the celebrated and almighty sage Vasiṣṭha has declared as something which cannot be undertaken ? (4) You are (yet) puerile (of understanding), O jewel among men ! Return (therefore) to your capital. The supremely glorious Vasiṣṭha is even capable of conducting the sacrifices of all the three worlds, O ruler of the earth ! (5) How shall we be able to offer indignity to him (by embarking on a venture which has been declared by him as something which cannot be taken in hand) ?" Hearing the aforesaid admonition of Vasiṣṭha's sons, couched (as it was) in words full of anger, the said king (however) once more made the following submission to them:—"I have actually been repulsed by the venerable Vasiṣṭha and even so by you, my preceptor's sons. I shall (accordingly) approach another patron. God bless you, O sages rich in askesis!" Highly enraged to hear the aforesaid submission, revealing as it did his terrible design (of disregarding Vasiṣṭha and thereby courting disaster), Vasiṣṭha's sons for their part cursed him in the following words:—"You shall descend to the state of a Chaṇḍāla (an outcaste of the lowest grade)!" Saying so, those exalted souls retired each to his own hermitage. (6—9)

अथ रात्र्यां व्यतीतायां राजा चण्डालतां गतः । नीलवस्त्रधरो नीलः पुरुषो ध्वस्तमूर्धजः ॥१०॥
चित्यमाल्याङ्गरागश्च आयसाभरणोऽभवत् । तं दृष्ट्वा मन्त्रिणः सर्वे त्यज्य चण्डालरूपिणम् ॥११॥
प्राद्रवन् सहिता राम पौरा येऽस्यानुगामिनः । एको हि राजा काकुत्स्थ जगाम परमात्मवान् ॥१२॥
दह्यमानो दिवारात्रं विश्वामित्रं तपोधनम् । विश्वामित्रस्तु तं दृष्ट्वा राजानं विफलीकृतम् ॥१३॥
चण्डालरूपिणं राम मुनिः कारुण्यमागतः । कारुण्यात् स महातेजा वाक्यं परमधार्मिकः ॥१४॥
इदं जगाद भद्रं ते राजानं घोरदर्शनम् । किमागमनकार्यं ते राजपुत्र महाबल ॥१५॥
अयोध्याधिपते वीर शापाच्चण्डालतां गतः ।

As soon as the night passed the king was reduced to the state of a Chaṇḍāla. Turning black (in complexion), he found himself clad in black (the very yellow silk wrapped round his loins having turned black) and his long hair fallen off, the garland decking his person having turned into garlands of flowers grown in a crematorium and the cosmetics with which it was anointed into a coat of ashes from the same unholy place, and the (gold and be jewelled) ornaments (on his person) having turned into those of iron*. Seeing him changed into the form of a Chaṇḍāla, all his counsellors as well as the citizens that had followed him (to the hermitages of his preceptor's sons), O Rāma, ran away in a body deserting him. Extremely self-possessed, though burning with agony day and night, O scion of Kakutstha, the king went all alone to Viśwāmitra, whose only wealth (now) was his asceticism. Viśwāmitra, who was (now) living as a hermit, O Rāma, was moved to pity at the very sight of the king, who had not only been frustrated but transformed into a Chaṇḍāla. Out of compassion the exceptionally glorious and supremely pious Viśwāmitra spoke to the king, who had assumed a frightful aspect, as follows:—"May all be well with you! What is the object of your visit, O mighty prince, O valiant ruler of Ayodhya, reduced as you are to the state of a Chaṇḍāla through a curse?"

---

* This shows that the Varṇa or grade of society in which one is born cannot be altered by mere change of avocation as is now alleged by some modern critics. The change is brought about only by one's good or evil Karma or by the will of another powerful soul ordinarily in a future life but in exceptional circumstances even in one's current life as in the present case or in the case of Viśwāmitra as will be shown hereafter. It further shows that such a change transforms not only one's appearances but the very constituents of one's body. This was, however, clearly evidenced only at a time when the rules of Varṇāśrama were strictly followed and enforced by the ruling authority.

अथ तद्वाक्यमाकर्ण्य राजा चण्डालतां गतः ॥१६॥
अब्रवीत् प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यं वाक्यज्ञो वाक्यकोविदम् । प्रत्याख्यातोऽस्मि गुरुणा गुरुपुत्रैस्तथैव च ॥१७॥
अनवाप्यैव तं कामं मया प्राप्तो विपर्ययः । सशरीरो दिवं यायामिति मे सौम्यदर्शन ॥१८॥
मया चेष्टं क्रतुशतं तच्च नावाप्यते फलम् । अनृतं नोक्तपूर्वं मे न च वक्ष्ये कदाचन ॥१९॥
कृच्छ्रेष्वपि गतः सौम्य क्षत्रधर्मेण ते शपे । यज्ञैर्बहुविधैरिष्टं प्रजा धर्मेण पालिताः ॥२०॥
गुरवश्च महात्मानः शीलवृत्तेन तोषिताः । धर्मे प्रयतमानस्य यज्ञं चाहर्तुमिच्छतः ॥२१॥
परितोषं न गच्छन्ति गुरवो मुनिपुंगव । दैवमेव परं मन्ये पौरुषं तु निरर्थकम् ॥२२॥
दैवेनाक्रम्यते सर्वं दैवं हि परमा गतिः ।
तस्य मे परमार्तस्य प्रसादमभिकाङ्क्षतः । कर्तुमर्हसि भद्रं ते दैवोपहतकर्मणः ॥२३॥
नान्यां गतिं गमिष्यामि नान्यच्छरणमस्ति मे । दैवं पुरुषकारेण निवर्तयितुमर्हसि ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डेऽष्टपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५८ ॥

Hearing the question of Viśwāmitra, the king, who knew the art of speaking, even though reduced to the state of a Chaṇḍāla, forthwith spoke as follows with joined palms to Viśwāmitra (who was a master of expression) :—"I have been repulsed by my preceptor (Sage Vasiṣṭha). and even so by my preceptor's sons. (10—17) Even without attaining that object of my desire a contrary result has been met with by me. In fact a hundred sacrifices were intended to be performed by me in order that I might ascend bodily to heaven, O sage of pleasing aspect! But neither is that consummation (in the shape of my being able to perform a hundred sacrifices) attained by me nor the reward (sought by me in the shape of my being translated to heaven). No untruth has (ever) been uttered by me in the past nor shall I ever tell a lie (in future) even when reduced to straits, O good sir! I swear by my allegiance to the duties of a Kṣatriya. Worship has been offered (by me to God) through sacrificial performances of various kinds and people have been governed with righteousness. (18-19) (Nay) the elders no less than exalted souls have been gratified through my good qualities and right conduct. My preceptors (however) did not derive satisfaction through me even though I strove hard in the cause of righteousness and sought to undertake a acrifice (in order to be able to attain to heaven in my physical body), O jewel among sages! I (therefore) reckon fate alone as supreme and personal effort as of no avail (when matched against fate). (20—22) Everything (else) is thrown into the background by fate. Indeed destiny is the highest refuge. Be pleased (therefore) to extend your grace to me, who eagerly long for it, sore afflicted as I am, (all) my effort having been counteracted by (an evil) destiny. May God bless you! (23) I shall seek no other shelter; (in fact) there is no other asylum for me. Be good enough to avert my (evil) destiny through personal effort." (24)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-eight in the Bala-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकोनषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LIX

Viśwāmitra assures Triśanku of his help, sends word to a number of sages, inviting them to conduct a sacrifice for Triśanku, and pronounces a curse on those who declined to come.

उक्तवाक्यं तु राजानं कृपया कुशिकात्मजः । अब्रवीन्मधुरं वाक्यं साक्षाच्चण्डालतां गतम् ॥ १ ॥
इक्ष्वाको स्वागतं वत्स जानामि त्वां सुधार्मिकम् । शरणं ते प्रदास्यामि मा भैषीर्नृपपुंगव ॥ २ ॥
अहमामन्त्रये सर्वान् महर्षीन् पुण्यकर्मणः । यज्ञसाह्यकरान् राजंस्ततो यक्ष्यसि निर्वृतः ॥ ३ ॥
गुरुशापकृतं रूपं यदिदं त्वयि वर्तते । अनेन सह रूपेण सशरीरो गमिष्यसि ॥ ४ ॥
हस्तप्राप्तमहं मन्ये स्वर्गं तव नराधिप । यस्त्वं कौशिकमागम्य शरण्यं शरणागतः ॥ ५ ॥
एवमुक्त्वा महातेजाः पुत्रान् परमधार्मिकान् । व्यादिदेश महाप्राज्ञान् यज्ञसम्भारकारणात् ॥ ६ ॥
सर्वाञ्छिष्यान् समाहूय वाक्यमेतदुवाच ह । सर्वानृषीन् सवासिष्ठानानयध्वं ममाज्ञया ॥ ७ ॥
सशिष्यान् सुहृदश्चैव सर्त्विजः सुबहुश्रुतान् । यदन्यो वचनं ब्रूयान्मद्वाक्यबलचोदितः ॥ ८ ॥
तत् सर्वमखिलेनोक्तं ममाख्येयमनादृतम् ।

Viśwāmitra (the son of Gādhi) kindly gave the following suave reply to the king (Triśanku), who had actually been reduced to the state of a Chaṇḍāla, when he had finished his say :—(1) "Welcome is your visit (to my hermitage), O scion of Ikṣwāku! I know you to be exceedingly pious, my child! I shall afford shelter to you; don't be afraid, O jewel among kings! (2) I shall (presently) send word to all great Ṛṣis of virtuous deeds, who will help you in the performance of a sacrifice (intended to be undertaken by you), O king! Then you will prosecute your sacrificial undertaking at ease. (3) You will bodily ascend to heaven in this (very) form, which now stands inflicted on you by the curse of your preceptor (in the form of his sons). (4) I consider heaven as (already) attained by you, O ruler of men, in that having sought (the presence of) Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika, *i. e.*, myself), you have come for protection to one who is capable of affording shelter to those who need it." (5) Saying so, the exceptionally glorious Viśwāmitra commanded his supremely pious and highly intelligent sons to make preparations for a sacrifice. (6) Summoning all his dependents, so the tradition goes, he gave the following instructions (to them) :—"Under my orders bring (here) all the Ṛṣis, including the sons of Vasiṣṭha, as well as their relations well-versed in a good many subjects, along with their pupils and priests capable of officiating at a sacrifice. If anyone who is summoned on the strength of my word or anyone else makes any disparaging observation, all those remarks should be reproduced to me in their entirety."

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा दिशो जग्मुस्तदाज्ञया ॥ ९ ॥
आजग्मुरथ देशेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यो ब्रह्मवादिनः ।

ते च शिष्याः समागम्य मुनिं ज्वलिततेजसम् ॥१०॥
ऊचुश्च वचनं सर्वं सर्वेषां ब्रह्मवादिनाम् । श्रुत्वा ते वचनं सर्वे समायान्ति द्विजातयः ॥११॥
सर्वदेशेषु चागच्छन् वर्जयित्वा महोदयम् । वासिष्ठं यच्छतं सर्वं क्रोधपर्याकुलाक्षरम् ॥१२॥
यदाह वचनं सर्वं श्रृणु त्वं मुनिपुंगव । क्षत्रियो याजको यस्य चण्डालस्य विशेषतः ॥१३॥
कथं सदसि भोक्तारो हविस्तस्य सुरर्षयः । ब्राह्मणा वा महात्मानो भुक्त्वा चाण्डालभोजनम् ॥१४॥
कथं स्वर्गं गमिष्यन्ति विश्वामित्रेण पालिताः । एतद् वचननैष्ठुर्यमूचुः संरक्तलोचनाः ॥१५॥
वासिष्ठा मुनिशार्दूल सर्वे सहमहोदयाः । तेषां तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा सर्वेषां मुनिपुंगवः ॥१६॥
क्रोधसंरक्तनयनः सरोषमिदमब्रवीत् ।

Hearing the aforesaid order of Viśwāmitra, his servants proceeded in various directions under his command. (7—9) In due course exponents of the Vedas began to pour from all lands. Nay, returning to Viśwāmitra (who was now living as a hermit) of flaming glory, all his dependents too repeated (to him) the remarks of all the exponents of the Vedas (whom they had approached). (The servants said,) "Hearing your call all (learned) Brahmans belonging to all lands are duly coming, while some have (already) arrived, barring (of course) Mahodaya and all the hundred sons of Vasiṣṭha. Hear you (now), O jewel among sages, all the observations they made in an angry tone. How would gods, they said, partake of the offerings and how would Ṛṣis eat the remains of those offerings in the sacrificial assembly of a sacrificer whose sacrifice is being conducted by a Kṣatriya, much less of a Chaṇḍāla ? And how on eating the food offered by a Chāṇḍāla would the high-souled Brahmans patronized by Viśwāmitra attain to heaven (after death) ? Such harshness of language did all the sons of Vasiṣṭha along with Mahodaya use with bloodshot eyes, O tiger among sages !" Hearing the aforesaid comment of all those sages, Viśwāmitra (a jewel among ascetics) indignantly, spoke as follows with eyes blood-red through anger:—

यद् दूषयन्त्यदुष्टं मां तप उग्रं समास्थितम् ॥१७॥
भस्मीभूता दुरात्मानो भविष्यन्ति न संशयः । अद्य ते कालपाशेन नीता वैवस्वतक्षयम् ॥१८॥
सप्तजातिशतान्येव मृतपाः सम्भवन्तु ते । श्वमांसनियताहारा मुष्टिका नाम निर्घृणाः ॥१९॥
विकृताश्च विरूपाश्च लोकाननुचरन्त्विमान् । महोदयश्च दुर्बुद्धिर्मामदूष्यं ह्यदूषयत् ॥२०॥
दूषितः सर्वलोकेषु निषादत्वं गमिष्यति । प्राणातिपातनिरतो निरनुक्रोशतां गतः ॥२१॥
दीर्घकालं मम क्रोधाद् दुर्गतिं वर्तयिष्यति ।
एतावदुक्त्वा वचनं विश्वामित्रो महातपाः । विरराम महातेजा ऋषिमध्ये महामुनिः ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकोनषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ५९ ॥

"Since they speak ill of me, even though engaged in severe austerities and (as such) irreproachable, the evil-minded fellows will be reduced to ashes, and conveyed to the abode of Yama (son of the sun-god) this (very) day by the noose of Kāla (the god of death); there is no doubt about it. (10—18) Let them be born for seven hundred successive births as ruthless Muṣṭikas (a sub-caste of the Chaṇḍālas, now known as Doms) who take away the shroud of dead bodies and feed as a rule on the flesh of dogs, and let them roam about these (terrestrial) regions following loathsome pursuits and misshapen in form. The misguided Mahodaya, too, since he has spoken ill of me, though irreproachable, shall be condemned in all the lands and reduced to the state of a Niṣāda (an outcaste race born of a Brahman through a Śūdra woman and), remaining engaged in destroying the lives of others and (thereby) acquiring a merciless disposition, shall drag a wretched existence for a long time because of my wrath." Uttering this long curse in the midst of Ṛṣis (assembled for the sacrifice), the highly glorious and eminent sage and great ascetic Viśwāmitra ceased speaking. (19—22)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-nine in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LX

At the instance of Viśwāmitra the sages assembled at his hermitage commence a sacrifice; on the gods failing to appear at the sacrifice to accept the offerings, Viśwāmitra sends Triśanku bodily to heaven by dint of his own spiritual power, but the latter is expelled by Indra, on which Viśwāmitra stops him in the air and proceeds to create a new heaven and desists from his purpose only on the gods granting his desire.

तपोबलहताञ्ज्ञात्वा वासिष्ठान् समहोदयान् । ऋषिमध्ये महातेजा विश्वामित्रोऽभ्यभाषत ॥ १ ॥
अयमिक्ष्वाकुदायादस्त्रिशङ्कुरिति विश्रुतः । धर्मिष्ठश्च वदान्यश्च मां चैव शरणं गतः ॥ २ ॥
स्वेनानेन शरीरेण देवलोकजिगीषया । यथायं स्वशरीरेण देवलोकं गमिष्यति ॥ ३ ॥
तथा प्रवर्त्यतां यज्ञो भवद्भिश्च मया सह । विश्वामित्रवचः श्रुत्वा सर्व एव महर्षयः ॥ ४ ॥
ऊचुः समेताः सहसा धर्मज्ञा धर्मसंहितम् । अयं कुशिकदायादो मुनिः परमकोपनः ॥ ५ ॥
यदाह वचनं सम्यगेतत् कार्यं न संशयः । अग्निकल्पो हि भगवान् शापं दास्यति रोषतः ॥ ६ ॥
तस्मात् प्रवर्त्यतां यज्ञः सशरीरो यथा दिवि । गच्छेदिक्ष्वाकुदायादो विश्वामित्रस्य तेजसा ॥ ७ ॥
ततः प्रवर्त्यतां यज्ञः सर्वे समधितिष्ठत ।

Coming to know (by his yogic power) of Vasiṣṭha's sons having been ruined along with Mahodaya by dint of his spiritual power, the exceptionally glorious Viśwāmitra spoke (as follows) in the midst of the Ṛṣis (assembled at his hermitage):—(1) "Here is a scion of Ikṣwāku, widely known by the name of Triśanku, who is not only exceedingly pious but generous also and has moreover sought me as his refuge with the desire of ascending to the realm of gods in his own present form (of a Chaṇḍāla). A sacrifice may (kindly) be set on foot by you (collectively) along with me so that this prince may ascend to the region of gods in his own embodied state." Hearing the request of Viśwāmitra, all the great Ṛṣis (present in that assembly), who knew what is right, conferred and quickly made (to one another) the following observation, consistent with righteousness:—"This sage, Viśwāmitra

(the son of Kuśika), is exceedingly irascible. (2—5) The proposal that he has put forward must be duly carried out: there is no doubt about it; for the almighty sage, who is brilliant as fire, will pronounce a curse (upon us) through anger (if his desire is not accomplished). (6) Therefore, let a sacrifice be set on foot so that Triśanku (a scion of Ikṣwāku) may bodily ascend to heaven by virtue of Viśwāmitra's spiritual energy. (7) Hence let a sacrifice be started and take up you all your (respective priestly) duties."

एवमुक्त्वा महर्षयः संजह्रुस्ताः क्रियास्तदा ॥ ८ ॥
याजकश्च महातेजा विश्वामित्रोऽभवत् क्रतौ । ऋत्विजश्चानुपूर्व्येण मन्त्रवन्मन्त्रकोविदाः ॥ ९ ॥
चक्रुः सर्वाणि कर्माणि यथाकल्पं यथाविधि । ततः कालेन महता विश्वामित्रो महातपाः ॥१०॥
चकारावाहनं तत्र भागार्थं सर्वदेवताः । नाभ्यागमंस्तदा तत्र भागार्थं सर्वदेवताः ॥११॥
ततः कोपसमाविष्टो विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । स्रुवमुद्यम्य सक्रोधस्त्रिशङ्कुमिदमब्रवीत् ॥१२॥
पश्य मे तपसो वीर्यं स्वार्जितस्य नरेश्वर । एष त्वां स्वशरीरेण नयामि स्वर्गमोजसा ॥१३॥
दुष्प्रापं स्वशरीरेण स्वर्गं गच्छ नरेश्वर । स्वार्जितं किंचिदप्यस्ति मया हि तपसः फलम् ॥१४॥
राजंस्त्वं तेजसा तस्य सशरीरो दिवं व्रज ।

Saying so, the great Ṛṣis (assembled there) then duly took charge of their (respective priestly) functions. (8) In that sacrifice the highly glorious Viśwāmitra was the chief priest (Adhwaryu). The (other) priests too, who were (all) well-versed in sacred texts (recited at the time of pouring oblations into the sacred fire), did all their (allotted) duties in their order of sequence according to the procedure as laid down in Kalpa (the branch of knowledge which prescribes rules for ceremonial and sacrificial acts) and with the recitation of (relevant) Mantras. Then for a long time the great ascetic, Viśwāmitra, invoked the presence in that sacrifice of all the gods (entitled to a share in the offerings made during a sacrifice) to take their (allotted) shares. (But) none of the gods appeared on that occasion in the aforesaid sacrifice to take their share. (9—11) Overwhelmed with anger, the eminent sage Viśwāmitra thereupon lifted up the sacrificial ladle (with which ghee is poured into the sacred fire) and, full of anger, addressed Triśanku as follows :—(12) "Behold the efficacy of the spiritual energy acquired by me with my own effort, O monarch ! I forthwith send you in your embodied state to heaven by virtue of my (spiritual) energy. (13) Ascend to heaven, which cannot be easily attained to in one's physical form, O ruler of men ! If any reward of my austerities has been earned by me at all, ascend you bodily to heaven by virtue of its glory, O monarch !"

उक्तवाक्ये मुनौ तस्मिन् सशरीरो नरेश्वरः ॥१५॥
दिवं जगाम काकुत्स्थ मुनीनां पश्यतां तदा । स्वर्गलोकं गतं दृष्ट्वा त्रिशङ्कुं पाकशासनः ॥१६॥
सह सर्वैः सुरगणैरिदं वचनमब्रवीत् । त्रिशङ्को गच्छ भूयस्त्वं नासि स्वर्गकृतालयः ॥१७॥
गुरुशापहतो मूढ पत भूमिमवाक्शिराः । एवमुक्तो महेन्द्रेण त्रिशङ्कुरपतत् पुनः ॥१८॥
विक्रोशमानस्त्राहीति विश्वामित्रं तपोधनम् । तच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य क्रोशमानस्य कौशिकः ॥१९॥
रोषमाहारयत् तीव्रं तिष्ठ तिष्ठेति चाब्रवीत् । ऋषिमध्ये स तेजस्वी प्रजापतिरिवापरः ॥२०॥
सृजन् दक्षिणमार्गस्थान् सप्तर्षीनपरान् पुनः । नक्षत्रवंशमपरमसृजत् क्रोधमूर्छितः ॥२१॥

दक्षिणां दिशमास्थाय ऋषिमध्ये महायशाः । सृष्ट्वा नक्षत्रवंशं च क्रोधेन कलुषीकृतः ॥२२॥
अन्यमिन्द्रं करिष्यामि लोको वा स्यादनिन्द्रकः । दैवतान्यपि स क्रोधात् स्रष्टुं समुपचक्रमे ॥२३॥

No sooner had the aforesaid sage (Viśwāmitra) finished his utterance, the king (Triśaṅku) bodily rose to heaven, O scion of Kakutstha, while the sages stood looking on. Seeing Triśaṅku arrived in the heavenly region, Indra (the tamer of the demon Pāka) along with all the hosts of gods (attending on him) spoke as follows :—"Triśaṅku, return you (to earth) since no abode has been earned by you in paradise. (14—17) Doomed (as you are) by your preceptor's curse, O fool, fall headlong to the earth !" Commanded thus by the mighty Indra, Triśaṅku fell again crying out to Viśwāmitra, whose (only) wealth was his asceticism, as follows :—"Save me !" Hearing the aforesaid appeal of the crying Triśaṅku, Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika) grew wildly angry and said, "Stop ! Stop (where you are) !!" Seated in the midst of Ṛṣis, stupefied with anger, that glorious sage, like another Brahmā (the creator of beings), evolved another group of seven constellations (corresponding to the Great Bear) coursing in the southern quarter, and (further) created a new galaxy of (twenty-seven) lunar mansions. (18—21) Nay, having created a (new) galaxy of lunar mansions in the southern quarter while remaining seated in the midst of Ṛṣis (assembled in his hermitage), excited with anger, he set about evolving in indignation (a hierarchy of) gods as well, saying to himself, "I shall create another Indra or else let my heaven remain without an Indra !" (22—33)

ततः परमसम्भ्रान्ताः सर्षिसंघाः सुरासुराः । विश्वामित्रं महात्मानमूचुः सानुनयं वचः ॥२४॥
अयं राजा महाभाग गुरुशापपरिक्षतः । सशरीरो दिवं यातुं नार्हत्येव तपोधन ॥२५॥
तेषां तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा देवानां मुनिपुंगवः । अब्रवीत् सुमहद् वाक्यं कौशिकः सर्वदेवताः ॥२६॥
सशरीरस्य भद्रं वस्त्रिशङ्कोरस्य भूपतेः । आरोहणं प्रतिज्ञातं नानृतं कर्तुमुत्सहे ॥२७॥
स्वर्गोऽस्तु सशरीरस्य त्रिशङ्कोरस्य शाश्वतः । नक्षत्राणि च सर्वाणि मामकानि ध्रुवाण्यथ ॥२८॥
यावल्लोका धरिष्यन्ति तिष्ठन्त्वेतानि सर्वशः । मत्कृतानि सुराः सर्वे तदनुज्ञातुमर्हथ ॥२९॥

Greatly perturbed at that, the gods as well as the demons, including the hosts of Ṛṣis, addressed to the high-souled Viśwāmitra the following submission full of conciliatory expressions :—(24) "This monarch (Triśaṅku), O highly blessed soul, who stands divested of his (stock of) merits by the curse of his preceptor, does not at all deserve to ascend bodily to heaven, O sage rich in asceticism !" (25) Hearing the aforesaid submission of those gods, Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika), a (veritable) jewel among hermits, gave the following noble reply to all the gods :—(26) "A pledge has been given (by me) to this monarch, Triśaṅku, to help him ascend bodily to heaven. May prosperity attend on you ! I dare not go back upon it. (27) Let perpetual heavenly bliss be the lot of this Triśaṅku in his physical body and also let all the lunar mansions created by me be abiding. (28) (Nay) let all these (heavenly) bodies evolved by me endure as long as these worlds (of Brahmā's creation) shall exist. Be pleased you all to grant that." (29)

एवमुक्ताः सुराः सर्वे प्रत्यूचुर्मुनिपुङ्गवम् । एवं भवतु भद्रं ते तिष्ठन्त्वेतानि सर्वशः ॥३०॥
गगने तान्यनेकानि वैश्वानरपथाद् बहिः । नक्षत्राणि मुनिश्रेष्ठ तेषु ज्योतिष्षु जाज्वलन् ॥३१॥

अवाक्शिरास्त्रिशङ्कुश्च तिष्ठत्वमरसंनिभः । अनुयास्यन्ति चैतानि ज्योतींषि नृपसत्तमम् ॥३२॥
कृतार्थं कीर्तिमन्तं च स्वर्गलोकगतं यथा । विश्वामित्रस्तु धर्मात्मा सर्वदेवैरभिष्टुतः ॥३३॥
ऋषिमध्ये महातेजा बाढमित्येव देवताः ।
ततो देवा महात्मानो ऋषयश्च तपोधनाः । जग्मुर्यथागतं सर्वे यज्ञस्यान्ते नरोत्तम ॥३४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे षष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६० ॥

Requested thus, all the gods replied (as follows) to Viśwāmitra (a jewel among sages):—"Amen! May all be well with you!! Let all these endure!!! (30) Let those many lunar mansions endure in the heavens beyond the orbit of the stellar sphere (as defined by standard works on astronomy), O jewel among sages! And let Triśanku, happy as a god, remain suspended with his head downward, shining brightly in the midst of those stars. Nay, these stars will circumambulate Triśanku (the noblest among kings), who will be accomplished of purpose and glorious like a denizen of the heavenly regions." Glorified by all the gods in the midst of the Ṛsis (assembled there), the highly glorious Viśwāmitra too, whose mind is given to piety, merely said to the gods, "All right!" Then, at the end of the sacrifice (which was in the meantime concluded by replacing Triśanku by a representative and after the gods had partaken of the offerings), O jewel among men, all the gods as well as the high-souled Ṛsis, whose (only) wealth was their asceticism, returned (even) as they had come. (31—34)

Thus ends Canto Sixty in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛsi and the oldest epic.

◆

एकषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXI

The animal to be sacrificed at the sacrificial performance of King Ambarīṣa having been stolen away by Indra appearing in disguise, the arch-priest enjoined the king to secure a human beast as a substitute. Wandering in search of such a beast, Ambarīṣa saw the sage Ṛchika at Bhṛgutunga and requested him to hand over his juvenile son in exchange for a hundred thousand cows. On the parents declining to part with their eldest and youngest sons, the middle one, Śunahśepa by name, voluntarily offered himself for being sold and the king returned with him to his capital.

विश्वामित्रो महातेजाः प्रस्थितान् वीक्ष्य तानृषीन् । अब्रवीन्नरशार्दूल सर्वांस्तान् वनवासिनः ॥ १ ॥
महाविघ्नः प्रवृत्तोऽयं दक्षिणामास्थितो दिशम् । दिशमन्यां प्रपत्स्यामस्तत्र तप्स्यामहे तपः ॥ २ ॥

पश्चिमायां विशालायां पुष्करेषु महात्मनः । सुखं तपश्चरिष्यामः सुखं तद्धि तपोवनम् ॥ ३ ॥
एवमुक्त्वा महातेजाः पुष्करेषु महामुनिः । तप उग्रं दुराधर्षं तेपे मूलफलाशनः ॥ ४ ॥
एतस्मिन्नेव काले तु अयोध्याधिपतिर्महान् । अम्बरीष इति ख्यातो यष्टुं समुपचक्रमे ॥ ५ ॥
तस्य वै यजमानस्य पशुमिन्द्रो जहार ह । प्रणष्टे तु पशौ विप्रो राजानमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ६ ॥
पशुरभ्याहृतो राजन् प्रणष्टस्तव दुर्नयात् । अरक्षितारं राजानं घ्नन्ति दोषा नरेश्वर ॥ ७ ॥
प्रायश्चित्तं महद्ध्येतन्नरं वा पुरुषर्षभ । आनयस्व पशुं शीघ्रं यावत् कर्म प्रवर्तते ॥ ८ ॥

Perceiving the aforesaid Ṛṣis, who dwelt in woods, about to depart, the highly glorious Viśwāmitra, O Rāma (a tiger among men), now spoke to them all (in the following words):—(1) "This great impediment (in the shape of Triśanku) has come over the southern quarter. (Hence) we shall seek another quarter and practise askesis there. (2) We shall smoothly practise asceticism (in the woods) by the side of the Pushkar lakes in the extensive western region, O high-souled ones; for delightful is that forest meant for austerities." (3) Having spoken thus, the great sage (Viśwāmitra), who was highly glorious, began to practise severe asceticism, (which was) difficult to put down, living on roots and fruits (alone). (4) At this very time the great king of Ayodhya, known by the name of Ambarīṣa, for his part began to perform a (horse-) sacrifice. (5) Even while he was carrying on his sacrificial performance, Indra stole away the sacrificial animal: so it is said. The animal having mysteriously disappeared, the (arch-) priest (officiating at the sacrifice) addressed the following words to the king:—(6) "The sacrificial animal brought here, O king, has disappeared through your negligence. Sins (accruing from such negligence) destroy the king who fails to guard his sacrifice, O ruler of men! (7) (Hunt out and) quickly bring (back), O jewel among men, the (lost) animal (or a human beast as a substitute) before the sacrifice (actually) commences*; for such is the principal atonement† (prescribed by the scriptures) for the sin (incurred by you through the loss of the consecrated animal)." (8)

उपाध्यायवचः श्रुत्वा स राजा पुरुषर्षभः । अन्वियेष महाबुद्धिः पशुं गोभिः सहस्रशः ॥ ९ ॥
देशाञ्जनपदांस्तांस्तान् नगराणि वनानि च । आश्रमाणि च पुण्यानि मार्गमाणो महीपतिः ॥१०॥
स पुत्रसहितं तात सभार्यं रघुनन्दन । भृगुतुङ्गे समासीनमृचीकं संददर्श ह ॥११॥
तमुवाच महातेजाः प्रणम्याभिप्रसाद्य च । महर्षिं तपसा दीप्तं राजर्षिरमितप्रभः ॥१२॥
पृष्ट्वा सर्वत्र कुशलमृचीकं तमिदं वचः ।

Hearing the injunction of the family priest, and taking with him thousands of cows (for being given in exchange on demand), that highly intelligent king, a (veritable) jewel among men, searched for a human beast (to be sacrificed in place of the sacrificial horse). Carrying on his search (for the stolen horse as well as for a human substitute) through different principalities and their subdivisions, cities, woodlands and holy hermitages, the aforesaid king, O dear Rāma (a scion of Raghu), saw at close quarters, on Mount Bhṛgutunga (a mountain-peak associated with Sage Bhṛgu, one of the nine mind-born sons of Brahmā), the sage Ṛchīka sitting at ease with his sons and wife: so the tradition goes. (9—11) Bowing low to him and (thereby) securing his good will and (also) inquiring after his all-round welfare, the highly glorious Ambarīṣa (a royal sage), who was possessed of infinite splendour, addressed the following submission to that sage Ṛchīka, aglow with spiritual energy acquired through askesis :—

---

* The period intervening the release and the return of the sacrificial horse from its wanderings is considered to be a sort of respite when the sacrificial proceedings are held in abeyance.

†. The compound word 'Prāyaśchitta' is composed of two parts 'Prāyas' and 'Chitta', whose meaning is tersely given in the following Sanskrit half-verse:—

प्रायः पापं विजानीयाच्चित्तं तच्छोधनं स्मृतम् ।

"One should understand the word 'Prāyas' to mean 'sin', while 'Chitta' has been recognized as conveying the sense of its 'atonement'."

गवां शतसहस्रेण विक्रीणीषे सुतं यदि ॥१३॥
पशोरर्थे महाभाग कृतकृत्योऽस्मि भार्गव । सर्वे परिगता देशा यज्ञियं न लभे पशुम् ॥१४॥
दातुमर्हसि मूल्येन सुतमेकमितो मम । एवमुक्तो महातेजा ऋचीकस्त्वब्रवीद् वचः ॥१५॥
नाहं ज्येष्ठं नरश्रेष्ठ विक्रीणीयां कथंचन । ऋचीकस्य वचः श्रुत्वा तेषां माता महात्मनाम् ॥१६॥
उवाच नरशार्दूलमम्बरीषमिदं वचः । अविक्रेयं सुतं ज्येष्ठं भगवानाह भार्गवः ॥१७॥
ममापि दयितं विद्धि कनिष्ठं शुनकं प्रभो । तस्मात् कनीयसं पुत्रं न दास्ये तव पार्थिव ॥१८॥
प्रायेण हि नरश्रेष्ठ ज्येष्ठाः पितृषु वल्लभाः । मातृणां च कनीयांसस्तस्माद् रक्ष्ये कनीयसम् ॥१९॥
उक्तवाक्ये मुनौ तस्मिन् मुनिपत्न्यां तथैव च । शुनःशेपः स्वयं राम मध्यमो वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥२०॥
पिता ज्येष्ठमविक्रेयं माता चाह कनीयसम् । विक्रेयं मध्यमं मन्ये राजपुत्र नयस्व माम् ॥२१॥

"If for a lakh of cows you (agree to) sell one of your sons (in my favour) for being used as a sacrificial animal, O highly blessed one, I shall feel accomplished of purpose, O scion of Bhṛgu ! All territories have been ransacked (by me), but I have not (yet) recovered the sacrificial horse. (12—14) Be pleased (therefore) to deliver one of these sons to me for consideration." Requested thus (by the king), the highly glorious sage Ṛchīka for his part spoke as follows:—(15) "I am not prepared to sell my eldest boy on any account, O jewel among men !" Hearing the answer of Ṛchīka (her husband), the mother of those high-minded boys addressed the following words to Ambarīṣa, a tiger among men:— "The venerable Ṛchīka (a scion of Sage Bhṛgu) declares our eldest son as unworthy of being sold. (16-17) Know Śunaka too, the youngest, to be my favourite, O lord ! Therefore, I shall not hand over my youngest son to you, O ruler of the earth ! (18) For, as a general rule, O jewel among men, eldest sons are the pets of their fathers; while the youngest are the darlings of their mothers. Hence I shall retain the youngest." (19) The sage having replied as above and his wife too having spoken even as she had done, O Rāma, Śunaḥśepa, the middle one, uttered the following words of his own accord:— (20) "Father pronounces the eldest to be unfit for sale and mother speaks of the youngest as such. I (thereby) conclude the middle one (*i. e.*, myself) to be worthy of being disposed of. Take me away (therefore), O king (a king's son yourself) !" (21)

अथ राजा महाबाहो वाक्यान्ते ब्रह्मवादिनः । हिरण्यस्य सुवर्णस्य कोटिभी रत्नराशिभिः ॥२२॥
गवां शतसहस्रेण शुनःशेपं नरेश्वरः । गृहीत्वा परमप्रीतो जगाम रघुनन्दन ॥२३॥
अम्बरीषस्तु राजर्षी रथमारोप्य सत्वरः । शुनःशेपं महातेजा जगामाशु महायशाः ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६१ ॥

Taking Śunaḥśepa at once (with him) in exchange for tens of millions of silver and gold coins, heaps of precious stones and a lakh of cows at the end of the (aforesaid) utterance of the Brahman boy (who was an expositor of the Vedas), O mighty-armed Rāma (a scion of Raghu), King Ambarīṣa, a ruler of men, departed, highly pleased. (22-23) Quickly placing Śunaḥśepa in his chariot, the exceedingly glorious and highly illustrious Ambarīṣa, a royal sage, hurriedly left (for his capital). (24)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-one in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्विषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXII

On reaching Pushkar, while Ambarīṣa is taking rest, Śunaḥśepa approaches Viśwāmitra, who was practising austerities there, and inquires of him a means of escaping death without meeting with the king's opposition, whereupon Viśwāmitra teaches him a prayer each for propitiating Indra and Lord Viṣṇu respectively, by reciting which the boy secures release from Ambarīṣa's bondage and the latter gets the reward of the sacrifice without sacrificing him.

शुनश्शेपं नरश्रेष्ठ गृहीत्वा तु महायशाः । व्यश्रमत् पुष्करे राजा मध्याह्ने रघुनन्दन ॥ १ ॥
तस्य विश्रममाणस्य शुनश्शेपो महायशाः । पुष्करं ज्येष्ठमागम्य विश्वामित्रं ददर्श ह ॥ २ ॥
तप्यन्तमृषिभिः सार्धं मातुलं परमातुरः । विषण्णवदनो दीनस्तृष्णया च श्रमेण च ॥ ३ ॥
पपाताङ्के मुने राम वाक्यं चेदमुवाच ह । न मेऽस्ति माता न पिता ज्ञातयो बान्धवाः कुतः ॥ ४ ॥
त्रातुमर्हसि मां सौम्य धर्मेण मुनिपुंगव । त्राता त्वं हि नरश्रेष्ठ सर्वेषां त्वं हि भावनः ॥ ५ ॥
राजा च कृतकार्यः स्यादहं दीर्घायुरव्ययः । स्वर्गलोकमुपाश्नीयां तपस्तप्त्वा ह्यनुत्तमम् ॥ ६ ॥
स मे नाथो ह्यनाथस्य भव भव्येन चेतसा । पितेव पुत्रं धर्मात्मंस्त्रातुमर्हसि किल्बिषात् ॥ ७ ॥

Taking Śunaḥśepa (with him), O jewel among men, the highly illustrious king (Ambarīṣa) for his part rested at Pushkar at noon, O scion of Raghu! (1) Making his way to the elder (main) Pushkar (there being two other lakes in the vicinity of the main lake, known as the middle and the younger Pushkar respectively), while the latter was taking rest, the highly renowned Śunaḥśepa, so the tradition goes, saw his maternal uncle*, Viśwāmitra, practising austerities with (other) sages. Nay, pulling a long face and looking miserable from thirst (or desire to live) and fatigue, the boy, who was sore afflicted, sank into the sage's lap, O Rāma, and spoke as follows, so it is said:—"There is no mother nor father to me; how (then) could there be (any) kinsmen or relations ? (2—4) Be pleased to deliver me, O gentle sir, in the name of piety, O jewel among sages; for you are the redeemer of all as well as their benefactor. (5) (Pray) so arrange that the king (Ambarīṣa) may realize his object (in the shape of a reward of his projected sacrifice), while I may be saved from death and, attaining a long life and practising austerities, ascend to the celestial plane, the highest of all (the three worlds). (6) With a cheerful mind indeed be you, celebrated as you are, a protector to me, a forlorn child. You ought to protect me, O pious soul, against adversity born of sin, (even) as a father protects his son." (7)

---

* It has already been mentioned in verse 7 of Canto XXXIV that Viśwāmitra had a sister, Satyavatī by name, who was given in marriage to Ṛchīka. It was of this Satyavatī that Śunaḥśepa was presumably born.

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा विश्वामित्रो महातपाः । सान्त्वयित्वा बहुविधं पुत्रानिदमुवाच ह ॥८॥
यत्कृते पितरः पुत्राञ्जनयन्ति शुभार्थिनः । परलोकहितार्थाय तस्य कालोऽयमागतः ॥९॥
अयं मुनिसुतो बालो मत्तः शरणमिच्छति । अस्य जीवितमात्रेण प्रियं कुरुत पुत्रकाः ॥१०॥
सर्वे सुकृतकर्माणः सर्वे धर्मपरायणाः । पशुभूता नरेन्द्रस्य तृप्तिमग्नेः प्रयच्छत ॥११॥
नाथवांश्च शुनश्शेपो यज्ञश्चाविघ्नतो भवेत् । देवतास्तर्पिताश्च स्युर्मम चापि कृतं वचः ॥१२॥
मुनेस्तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा मधुच्छन्दादयः सुताः । साभिमानं नरश्रेष्ठ सलीलमिदमब्रुवन् ॥१३॥
कथमात्मसुतान् हित्वा त्रायसेऽन्यसुतं विभो । अकार्यमिव पश्यामः श्वमांसमिव भोजने ॥१४॥
तेषां तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा पुत्राणां मुनिपुंगवः । क्रोधसंरक्तनयनो व्याहर्तुमुपचक्रमे ॥१५॥

Hearing the aforesaid prayer of Śunaḥśepa and consoling him in many ways, the great ascetic, Viśwāmitra, spoke to his (own) sons as follows, so it is said :—(8) "The time has just come for ensuring our good in the other world, for which fathers desirous of blessings beget sons. (9) This son of a hermit, who is (yet) a child, seeks deliverance through me. Do him a good turn, my dear sons, by merely parting with your own life. (10) You are all engaged in virtuous acts and are all devoted to duty. Taking the place of a victim at the sacrificial performance of the king (Ambarīṣa), afford satisfaction to the god of fire. (11) (In this way) not only will Śunaḥśepa find a protector (in us and secure deliverance from death) but the sacrifice (of Ambarīṣa) will also be completed without (any let or) hindrance. Nay, the gods will have been propitiated and my pledge (of security given to him) redeemed." (12) Hearing the aforesaid exhortation of Viśwāmitra, O jewel among men, his sons, of whom Madhuchchhandā was the eldest, proudly and lightly replied as follows :—(13) "How is it that you (proceed to) save another's son, parting with your own sons, O almighty sage ? We reckon this (attempt of yours) to be almost (as) sacrilegious as including the flesh of a dog in one's dish." (14) Hearing the aforesaid comment of his above-named sons, Viśwāmitra (a jewel among sages) proceeded to curse them (as follows), his eyes bloodshot through anger :—(15)

निस्साध्वसमिदं प्रोक्तं धर्मादपि विगर्हितम् । अतिक्रम्य तु मद्वाक्यं दारुणं रोमहर्षणम् ॥१६॥
श्वमांसभोजिनः सर्वे वासिष्ठा इव जातिषु । पूर्णं वर्षसहस्रं तु पृथिव्यामनुवत्स्यथ ॥१७॥
कृत्वा शापसमायुक्तान् पुत्रान् मुनिवरस्तदा । शुनश्शेपमुवाचार्तं कृत्वा रक्षां निरामयाम् ॥१८॥
पवित्रपाशैराबद्धो रक्तमाल्यानुलेपनः । वैष्णवं यूपमासाद्य वाग्भिरग्निमुदाहर ॥१९॥
इमे च गाथे द्वे दिव्ये गायेथा मुनिपुत्रक । अम्बरीषस्य यज्ञेऽस्मिंस्ततः सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि ॥२०॥

"This reply, given by you disregarding my exhortation, is intrepid, (nay) divorced from piety, sharp and shocking too. (16) Like the sons of Vasiṣṭha, therefore, you shall be born on earth among the low-born classes (such as the Chaṇḍālas and Muṣṭikas) and, living on the flesh of dogs, drag your (wretched) existence for full thousand years." (17) Having subjected his sons to a curse (as aforesaid), Viśwāmitra (the foremost of hermits) then spoke to the wretched Śunaḥśepa (as follows), ensuring protection free from disease to him (by means of mystic spells) :— (18) "Scrambling to the sacrificial post sacred to Lord Viṣṇu, when you have been bound with cords of Darbha grass and adorned with a wreath of crimson flowers and bedaubed with red sandal-paste (for being offered as a victim at the sacrificial performance of King Ambarīṣa), glorify (through the sacred fire) Indra and Lord Viṣṇu by means of praises (addressed to them) and (then) you would do well to chant the two excellent psalms (invoking the two aforementioned deities) which I am presently going to teach you, O dear son of Sage Ṛchīka ! Thereby you will attain your object (in the shape of deliverance from death) at the projected sacrificial performance of King Ambarīṣa." (19-20)

शुनश्शेपो गृहीत्वा ते द्वे गाथे सुसमाहितः । त्वरया राजसिंहं तमम्बरीषमुवाच ह ॥२१॥
राजसिंह महाबुद्धे शीघ्रं गच्छावहे वयम् । निर्वर्तयस्व राजेन्द्र दीक्षां च समुदाहर ॥२२॥
तद् वाक्यमृषिपुत्रस्य श्रुत्वा हर्षसमन्वितः । जगाम नृपतिः शीघ्रं यज्ञवाटमतन्द्रितः ॥२३॥
सदस्यानुमते राजा पवित्रकृतलक्षणम् । पशुं रक्ताम्बरं कृत्वा यूपे तं समबन्धयत् ॥२४॥
स बद्धो वाग्भिरग्र्याभिरभितुष्टाव वै सुरौ । इन्द्रमिन्द्रानुजं चैव यथावन्मुनिपुत्रकः ॥२५॥
ततः प्रीतः सहस्राक्षो रहस्यस्तुतितोषितः । दीर्घमायुस्तदा प्रादाच्छुनश्शेपाय वासवः ॥२६॥
स च राजा नरश्रेष्ठ यज्ञस्य च समाप्तवान् । फलं बहुगुणं राम सहस्राक्षप्रसादजम् ॥२७॥
विश्वामित्रोऽपि धर्मात्मा भूयस्तेपे महातपाः । पुष्करेषु नरश्रेष्ठ दशवर्षशतानि च ॥२८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे द्विषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६२ ॥

Learning the aforementioned couple of psalms (as taught by Viśwāmitra) with a fully concentrated mind, Śunaḥśepa hastily spoke to the said King Ambarīṣa, a lion among kings, as follows:— (21) "O highly intelligent monarch, O lion among kings, let us both quickly proceed (to our destination). Go through (the ceremony of) consecration (for the sacrifice), O king of kings, and conclude the sacrifice (without any hitch or rub)." (22) Filled with joy to hear the aforesaid request of the sage's son (Śunaḥśepa), the king (Ambarīṣa) quickly reached the sacrificial enclosure, shaking off all lethargy. (23) Having bound Śunaḥśepa (the sacrificial victim) with a cord of Darbha grass and (thereby) providing him with the distinctive mark of a victim and dressing him in a red attire, the king, who acted upon the advice of the superintending priest, firmly tied him to the sacrificial post. (24) While remaining bound, the young hermit boy duly glorified indeed the two divinities, Indra and his younger brother (Lord Viṣṇu, manifested as the divine Dwarf) by means of excellent hymns. (25) Propitiated through the mystic psalms and filled with delight, Indra, the thousand-eyed divinity, thereupon granted (the boon of) a long life to Śunaḥśepa that (very) moment. (26) Nay, the said king (Ambarīṣa*) too, O jewel among men, duly attained, O

---

* According to Govindaraja, an esteemed commentator of the Rāmāyaṇa, Ambarīṣa is no other than King Hariśchandra, of whom a similar story is told in the Bahvṛcha-Brāhmaṇa.

Rāma, the manifold fruit of the sacrifice, yielded by the grace of Indra. (27) The great ascetic, Viśwāmitra, too, who is piety incarnate, began his austerities anew in the vicinity of the three lakes going by the name of Pushkar for another thousand years, O jewel among men ! (28)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-two in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रिषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXIII

Brahmā pays a visit to Viśwāmitra at Pushkar and rewards him with the status of a Ṛṣi (seer). There he feels enamoured of Menakā, a celestial nymph deputed by Indra, and enjoys life with her for ten years. At last he realizes his folly and retires to the Himalayas, where he renews his austerities and is rewarded with the status of a Maharṣi by Brahmā. Still dissatisfied, he prosecutes his austerities with renewed vigour.

पूर्णे वर्षसहस्रे तु व्रतस्नातं महामुनिम् । अभ्यगच्छन् सुराः सर्वे तपःफलचिकीर्षवः ॥ १ ॥
अब्रवीत् सुमहातेजा ब्रह्मा सुरुचिरं वचः । ऋषिस्त्वमसि भद्रं ते स्वार्जितैः कर्मभिः शुभैः ॥ २ ॥
तमेवमुक्त्वा देवेशस्त्रिदिवं पुनरभ्यगात् । विश्वामित्रो महातेजा भूयस्तेपे महत् तपः ॥ ३ ॥
ततः कालेन महता मेनका परमाप्सराः । पुष्करेषु नरश्रेष्ठ स्नातुं समुपचक्रमे ॥ ४ ॥
तां ददर्श महातेजा मेनकां कुशिकात्मजः । रूपेणाप्रतिमां तत्र विद्युतं जलदे यथा ॥ ५ ॥
कंदर्पदर्पवशगो मुनिस्तामिदमब्रवीत् । अप्सरः स्वागतं तेऽस्तु वस चेह ममाश्रमे ॥ ६ ॥
अनुगृह्णीष्व भद्रं ते मदनेन विमोहितम् ।

At the end of full one thousand years all the gods (headed by Brahmā, the creator) for their part, keen as they were to bestow (on the sage) the fruit of his austerities, personally called on Viśwāmitra (the eminent sage), who had (just) finished his ablutions marking the conclusion of a sacred vow. (1) The exceptionally glorious Brahmā addressed to him the following most pleasing words:—"May good betide you ! You have (now) become a Ṛṣi (pure and simple, while you were till now only a royal sage) by virtue of pious acts (in the shape of austerities) performed by your own self." (1-2) Speaking to him thus, Brahmā, (the suzerain lord of the gods) returned to (the highest) heaven (his own realm); while Viśwāmitra, the great ascetic, embarked once more on a course of severe austerities. (3) Then after a long time (one day) Menakā, a celestial nymph of the highest order, came to bathe in the (three) lakes going by the name of Pushkar, O jewel among men ! (4) The highly glorious Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika) beheld in the water (of one of the aforesaid lakes) the celebrated Menakā, matchless in beauty, shining like a streak of lightning in a cloud. (5) Succumbing to the passion of love, the sage (Viśwāmitra) spoke to her in the following words:— "My welcome to you, O celestial nymph !

Nay, dwell in this hermitage of mine. (6) May prosperity attend on you! Be gracious to me, infatuated as I am through love."

इत्युक्ता सा वरारोहा तत्र वासमथाकरोत् ॥ ७ ॥
तपसो हि महाविघ्नो विश्वामित्रमुपागमत् । तस्यां वसन्त्यां वर्षाणि पञ्च पञ्च च राघव ॥ ८ ॥
विश्वामित्राश्रमे सौम्ये सुखेन व्यतिचक्रमुः । अथ काले गते तस्मिन् विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः ॥ ९ ॥
सव्रीड इव संवृत्तश्चिन्ताशोकपरायणः । बुद्धिर्मुनेः समुत्पन्ना सामर्षा रघुनन्दन ॥१०॥
सर्वं सुराणां कर्मैतत् तपोऽपहरणं महत् । अहोरात्रापदेशेन गताः संवत्सरा दश ॥११॥
काममोहाभिभूतस्य विघ्नोऽयं प्रत्युपस्थितः । स निःश्वसन् मुनिवरः पश्चात्तापेन दुःखितः ॥१२॥
भीतामप्सरसं दृष्ट्वा वेपन्तीं प्राञ्जलिं स्थिताम् । मेनकां मधुरैर्वाक्यैर्विसृज्य कुशिकात्मजः ॥१३॥
उत्तरं पर्वतं राम विश्वामित्रो जगाम ह ।

Requested thus, the aforesaid belle forthwith took up her abode in that hermitage. (7) Indeed (in the form of this nymph) a great obstacle in the way of his austerities presented itself before Viśwāmitra. Twice five years were spent happily by her while living in that pleasant hermitage of Viśwāmitra, O Rāma! So much time having rolled by (unperceived), the great sage Viśwāmitra felt ashamed as it were and fell a prey to anxiety and grief. The revelation dawned on him, with a feeling of indignation, O scion of Raghu, that all that, which was a deep-laid design to rob him of the spiritual energy stored by him through askesis, was the work of the gods. (He said to himself,) "Ten (long) years have rolled by me as though it were a day and night, overwhelmed as I was by infatuation born of concupiscence. This is (nothing but) an obstacle come in my way!" Sighing deeply (with this thought) the said Viśwāmitra (the foremost of sages) felt distressed through remorse. (8—12) Seeing the celestial nymph Menakā standing (before him) with joined palms, trembling with fear, and dismissing her with sweet expressions, O Rāma, Viśwāmitra, son of Kuśika, proceeded to the northern mountain (the Himalayas): so the tradition goes.

स कृत्वा नैष्ठिकीं बुद्धिं जेतुकामो महायशाः ॥१४॥
कौशिकीतीरमासाद्य तपस्तेपे दुरासदम् । तस्य वर्षसहस्राणि घोरं तप उपासतः ॥१५॥
उत्तरे पर्वते राम देवतानामभूद् भयम् । आमन्त्रयन् समागम्य सर्वे सर्षिगणाः सुराः ॥१६॥
महर्षिशब्दं लभतां साध्वयं कुशिकात्मजः । देवतानां वचः श्रुत्वा सर्वलोकपितामहः ॥१७॥
अब्रवीन्मधुरं वाक्यं विश्वामित्रं तपोधनम् । महर्षे स्वागतं वत्स तपसोग्रेण तोषितः ॥१८॥
महत्त्वमृषिमुख्यत्वं ददामि तव कौशिक । ब्रह्मणस्तु वचः श्रुत्वा विश्वामित्रस्तपोधनः ॥१९॥
प्राञ्जलिः प्रणतो भूत्वा प्रत्युवाच पितामहम् ।

Making a (firm) resolve to observe lifelong celibacy with intent to conquer passion, and reaching the bank of the Kauśikī*, Viśwāmitra (the highly illustrious sage) practised austerities which were hard to accomplish (for others). Fear entered the mind of gods when they saw Viśwāmitra practising terrible austerities on the northern mountain for thousands of years (past). Approaching Brahmā, all the gods accompanied by hosts of Ṛṣis, prayed (to him as follows):—(13—16) "May yonder Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika) deservedly receive the title of Maharṣi (an eminent seer)." Hearing the intercession of the gods, Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation) addressed the following sweet words to Viśwāmitra, whose (only) wealth was his asceticism :— "Hail, O eminent seer ! Pleased with your severe austerities, O dear child, (I hereby) confer on you the distinction in the shape of the foremost rank among Ṛṣis, O son of Kuśika !" Hearing the boon of Brahmā, Viśwāmitra, however, whose only wealth was his asceticism, replied to Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation) with joined palms (as follows), bending low (with humility):—

---

* A reference is invited once more in this connection to verses 7-8 of Canto XXXIV, in which it has already been shown how the elder sister of Viśwāmitra, having followed her deceased husband to heaven, further turned into a river and still flows under the name of Kauśikī (the modern Kosi) in Bihar.

ब्रह्मर्षिशब्दमतुलं स्वार्जितैः कर्मभिः शुभैः ॥२०॥
यदि मे भगवानाह ततोऽहं विजितेन्द्रियः । तमुवाच ततो ब्रह्मा न तावत् त्वं जितेन्द्रियः ॥२१॥
यतस्व मुनिशार्दूल इत्युक्त्वा त्रिदिवं गतः । विप्रस्थितेषु देवेषु विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः ॥२२॥
ऊर्ध्वबाहुर्निरालम्बो वायुभक्षस्तपश्चरन् । घर्मे पञ्चतपा भूत्वा वर्षास्वाकाशसंश्रयः ॥२३॥
शिशिरे सलिलेशायी रात्र्यहानि तपोधनः । एवं वर्षसहस्रं हि तपो घोरमुपागमत् ॥२४॥
तस्मिन् संतप्यमाने तु विश्वामित्रे महामुनौ । संतापः सुमहानासीत् सुराणां वासवस्य च ॥२५॥
रम्भामप्सरसं शक्रः सर्वैः सह मरुद्गणैः । उवाचात्महितं वाक्यमहितं कौशिकस्य च ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे त्रिषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६३ ॥

"If Your Holiness used for me the epithet 'Brahmarṣi' (a Brahman seer), which has no equal (in my eyes), as earned through pious acts performed by myself, then (only) I should consider myself as having thoroughly conquered my senses." Thereupon Brahmā replied to him, "You have not been able to conquer your senses. (17—21) Strive (further), O tiger among sages !" Saying so, he rose to (the highest) heaven (Brahmaloka). On the gods having dispersed, the eminent sage Viśwāmitra resumed his austerities standing with his arms lifted upwards, living on air (alone) and remaining without any abode. (Nay) the ascetic (whose only wealth was his asceticism) remained seated in the midst of four fires (one in each quarter) and the sun (as the fifth overhead) in summer, in open air during the rains and standing in water for days and nights during the winter. In this way indeed he practised terrible austerities for a thousand years. (22—24) While the great sage Viśwāmitra was duly practising austerities (as aforesaid), deep anguish indeed seized the mind of the gods as well as of Indra. (25) Indra along with all the hosts of gods (called and) addressed to the celestial nymph Rambhā the following request, which was in his own interest, and prejudicial to Viśwāmitra (the son of Kuśika) :—(26)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-three in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुःषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXIV

Petrifying by means of a curse Rambhā, the celestial nymph sent by Indra to wean him from his austerities, Viśwāmitra resolves upon a further course of austerities.

सुरकार्यमिदं रम्भे कर्तव्यं सुमहत् त्वया । लोभनं कौशिकस्येह काममोहसमन्वितम् ॥ १ ॥

तथोक्ता साप्सरा राम सहस्राक्षेण धीमता । व्रीडिता प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यं प्रत्युवाच सुरेश्वरम् ॥ २ ॥
अयं सुरपते घोरो विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । क्रोधमुत्स्रक्ष्यते घोरं मयि देव न संशयः ॥ ३ ॥
ततो हि मे भयं देव प्रसादं कर्तुमर्हसि । एवमुक्तस्तया राम सभयं भीतया तदा ॥ ४ ॥
तामुवाच सहस्राक्षो वेपमानां कृताञ्जलिम् । मा भैषी रम्भे भद्रं ते कुरुष्व मम शासनम् ॥ ५ ॥
कोकिलो हृदयग्राही माधवे रुचिरद्रुमे । अहं कंदर्पसहितः स्थास्यामि तव पार्श्वतः ॥ ६ ॥
त्वं हि रूपं बहुगुणं कृत्वा परमभास्वरम् । तमृषिं कौशिकं भद्रे भेदयस्व तपस्विनम् ॥ ७ ॥

"This very great errand of the gods in the shape of beguiling Viśwāmitra conjointly with infatuating him by rousing his passion has to be done by you at this juncture." (1) Feeling abashed when told thus by the sagacious Indra (the thousand-eyed god), O Rāma, the aforesaid celestial nymph gave the following reply with joined palms to the ruler of gods :—(2) "This hot-tempered and eminent sage, Viśwāmitra, will pronounce a terrible curse on me, my lord: there is no doubt (about it), O ruler of gods ! (3) Since (great) fear on this score lurks in my mind, be pleased to take pity on (and excuse) me, my lord !" Requested thus with a mind full of fear by the frightened nymph on that occasion, O Rāma, Indra (the thousand-eyed god) spoke (as follows) to her, who stood trembling (before him) with joined palms:—"Do not be afraid, Rambhā; may all be well with you ! (Please) do my bidding. (4-5) Accompanied by the god of love, I (too) shall remain by your side in the form of a cuckoo, that captivates the heart (by its enthralling notes) in the vernal season when the trees assume a delightful appearance (with their green foliage and fragrant blossoms). (6) Wearing an exceedingly smart appearance full of manifold charms, do divert the mind of the celebrated sage Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika), who is given to austerities, O good lady !" (7)

सा श्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य कृत्वा रूपमनुत्तमम् । लोभयामास ललिता विश्वामित्रं शुचिस्मिता ॥ ८ ॥
कोकिलस्य तु शुश्राव वल्गु व्याहरतः स्वनम् । सम्प्रहृष्टेन मनसा स चैनामन्ववैक्षत ॥ ९ ॥
अथ तस्य च शब्देन गीतेनाप्रतिमेन च । दर्शनेन च रम्भाया मुनिः संदेहमागतः ॥१०॥
सहस्राक्षस्य तत् सर्वं विज्ञाय मुनिपुंगवः । रम्भां क्रोधसमाविष्टः शशाप कुशिकात्मजः ॥११॥
यन्मां लोभयसे रम्भे कामक्रोधजयैषिणम् । दशवर्षसहस्राणि शैली स्थास्यसि दुर्भगे ॥१२॥
ब्राह्मणः सुमहातेजास्तपोबलसमन्वितः । उद्धरिष्यति रम्भे त्वां मत्क्रोधकलुषीकृताम् ॥१३॥
एवमुक्त्वा महातेजा विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । अशक्नुवन् धारयितुं कोपं संतापमात्मनः ॥१४॥

Hearing his command and assuming looks which could not be excelled by another, the belle, who wore a bright smile (on her lips) proceeded to lure Viśwāmitra. (8) He heard the notes of the warbling cuckoo and with an overjoyed mind scanned her too. (9) Attracted by the notes of the cuckoo as well as by the unique song and sight of Rambhā, the sage now fell a doubting (whether the nymph had come of her own accord or had been sent by Indra to interfere with his austerities). (10) Concluding the whole mischief to be the doing of Indra (the thousand-eyed god), Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika), the foremost of ascetics, was filled with rage and cursed Rambhā (as follows):—(11) "Since you have tried to seduce me, who seek to conquer lust and anger, O Rambhā, you shall (continue to) stand as a stone image for ten thousand years, O hapless woman ! An exceptionally glorious Brahman (*viz*, Vasiṣṭha, a mind-born son of Brahmā) richly endowed with (spiritual) energy acquired through austerities, O Rambhā, will redeem you, who have been punished for your foul deed through my anger." (12-13) Having spoken thus, unable as he was to control his anger, the highly glorious and eminent sage, Viśwāmitra, fell a prey to remorse (on his having exhausted the stock of merits, earned through his austerities, by cursing the nymph) (14)

तस्य शापेन महता रम्भा शैली तदाभवत् । वचः श्रुत्वा च कंदर्पो महर्षेः स च निर्गतः ॥१५॥
कोपेन च महातेजास्तपोऽपहरणे कृते । इन्द्रियैरजितै राम न लेभे शान्तिमात्मनः ॥१६॥
बभूवास्य मनश्चिन्ता तपोऽपहरणे कृते । नैवं क्रोधं गमिष्यामि न च वक्ष्ये कथंचन ॥१७॥
अथवा नोच्छ्वसिष्यामि संवत्सरशतान्यपि । अहं हि शोषयिष्यामि आत्मानं विजितेन्द्रियः ॥१८॥
तावद् यावद्धि मे प्राप्तं ब्राह्मण्यं तपसार्जितम् । अनुच्छ्वसन्नभुञ्जानस्तिष्ठेयं शाश्वतीः समाः ॥१९॥
नहि मे तप्यमानस्य क्षयं यास्यन्ति मूर्तयः ।
एवं वर्षसहस्रस्य दीक्षां स मुनिपुंगवः । चकाराप्रतिमां लोके प्रतिज्ञां रघुनन्दन ॥२०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे चतुःषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६४ ॥

Under his terrible curse Rambhā instantly got petrified. And, hearing the curse of the great Ṛṣi (Viśwāmitra), Love as well as Indra slipped away. (15) (The stock of) his merit earned through austerities having been forfeited through his anger, O Rāma, Viśwāmitra too, though highly glorious, did not get peace of mind because of his unconquered senses. (16) The spiritual energy stored through his austerities having been lost, the thought entered his mind :—"I shall no more give way to anger thus nor speak on any account. (17) Or I shall not even breathe for hundreds of years. Indeed, having fully controlled my senses, I shall chaster my temper. (18) Till Brahmanhood is attained by me as earned through austerities I shall do without breathing or eating for numberless years. (19) Nor will my limbs get atrophied so long as I (continue to) practise austerities.' In this way the celebrated Viśwāmitra (the foremost of sages), O scion of Raghu, took a pledge, which had no parallel in this world, to embark on a sacred vow (of refraining from breathing and eating) for a thousand years. (20)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-four in the Bala-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Valmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXV

On Viśwāmitra not ceasing from his austerities even on his being conferred the title of a Brahmarṣi by Brahmā, Vasiṣṭha as urged by gods recognizes it and here ends the narration of Śatānanda. Having worshipped Viśwāmitra, King Janaka then returns to his palace.

अथ हैमवतीं राम दिशं त्यक्त्वा महामुनिः । पूर्वां दिशमनुप्राप्य तपस्तेपे सुदारुणम् ॥ १ ॥
मौनं वर्षसहस्रस्य कृत्वा व्रतमनुत्तमम् । चकाराप्रतिमं राम तपः परमदुष्करम् ॥ २ ॥

पूर्णे वर्षसहस्रे तु काष्ठभूतं महामुनिम् । विघ्नैर्बहुभिराधूतं क्रोधो नान्तरमाविशत् ॥ ३ ॥
स कृत्वा निश्चयं राम तप आतिष्ठताव्ययम् । तस्य वर्षसहस्रस्य व्रते पूर्णे महाव्रतः ॥ ४ ॥
भोक्तुमारब्धवानन्नं तस्मिन् काले रघूत्तम । इन्द्रो द्विजातिर्भूत्वा तं सिद्धमन्नमयाचत ॥ ५ ॥
तस्मै दत्त्वा तदा सिद्धं सर्वं विप्राय निश्चितः । निश्शेषितेऽन्ने भगवानभुक्त्वैव महातपाः ॥ ६ ॥
न किंचिदवदद् विप्रं मौनव्रतमुपास्थितः । तथैवासीत् पुनर्मौनमनुच्छ्वासं चकार ह ॥ ७ ॥

Leaving the northern quarter (in which stand the Himalayas), Viśwāmitra (the eminent sage) now sought the eastern quarter and began to practise most severe austerities (again). (1) Undertaking the supreme vow of (rigid) silence extending over a period of one thousand years, O Rāma, he embarked on a course of austerities which was most difficult to prosecute and had no parallel. (2) Even at the end of full one thousand years anger did not overpower the great sage, who remained stiff as wood (not even making any signs or gestures), even though he was in the meantime buffeted by many obstacles; (for) he had embarked on this course of austerities after making an unalterable resolution, O Rāma ! On his vow of prosecuting the austerities for a thousand years being completed, Viśwāmitra (who had taken that great vow) proceeded to take his food. Appearing at the nick of time in the guise of a Brahman, O scion of Raghu, Indra begged of him the cooked food (that had been served before him). (3—5) Having unhesitatingly given all the cooked food to the Brahman, and remaining without food, the (whole) stock having been exhausted, the great ascetic, possessed as he was of extraordinary power, did not speak a word to the Brahman, firm (as he was) in his vow of silence. He became silent once more even as before and (also) suspended his breath : so the tradition goes. (6-7)

अथ वर्षसहस्रं च नोच्छ्वसन् मुनिपुंगवः । तस्यानुच्छ्वसमानस्य मूर्ध्नि धूमो व्यजायत ॥ ८ ॥
त्रैलोक्यं येन सम्भ्रान्तमातापितमिवाभवत् । ततो देवर्षिगन्धर्वाः पन्नगोरगराक्षसाः ॥ ९ ॥
मोहितास्तपसा तस्य तेजसा मन्दरश्मयः । कश्मलोपहताः सर्वे पितामहमथाब्रुवन् ॥१०॥
बहुभिः कारणैर्देव विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । लोभितः क्रोधितश्चैव तपसा चाभिवर्धते ॥११॥
नह्यस्य वृजिनं किंचिद् दृश्यते सूक्ष्ममप्युत । न दीयते यदि त्वस्य मनसा यदभीप्सितम् ॥१२॥
विनाशयति त्रैलोक्यं तपसा सचराचरम् । व्याकुलाश्च दिशः सर्वा न च किंचित् प्रकाशते ॥१३॥
सागराः क्षुभिताः सर्वे विशीर्यन्ते च पर्वताः । प्रकम्पते च वसुधा वायुर्वातीह संकुलः ॥१४॥
ब्रह्मन् न प्रतिजानीमो नास्तिको जायते जनः । सम्मूढमिव त्रैलोक्यं सम्प्रक्षुभितमानसम् ॥१५॥
भास्करो निष्प्रभश्चैव महर्षेस्तस्य तेजसा । बुद्धिं न कुरुते यावन्नाशे देव महामुनिः ॥१६॥
तावत् प्रसादो भगवन्नग्निरूपो महाद्युतिः । कालाग्निना यथा पूर्वं त्रैलोक्यं दह्यतेऽखिलम् ॥१७॥
देवराज्यं चिकीर्षेत दीयतामस्य यन्मनः ।

Viśwāmitra (the foremost of ascetics) did not resume his respiration for another thousand years. While he kept his respiration suspended, there issued from his head a smoke by which all the three worlds were thrown into confusion and felt heated as it were. Bewildered by his askesis and overshadowed by his glory, nay, stricken with agony, all the gods, Ṛṣis and Gandharvas as well as the Nāgas, serpents and ogres thereupon (sought the presence of and) prayed to Brahmā (the creator) as follows :—(8—10) "Though tempted and provoked to anger through many causes, O lord, the great sage Viśwāmitra is rising more and more by virtue of his asceticism. (11) Not even a minute flaw of any description can be seen in him. If, however, that which is keenly sought after by his mind is not granted to him, he is sure to destroy all the three worlds including the animate and inanimate creation by (the fire of his) askesis. Nay, all the quarters are enveloped in darkness and nothing is (clearly) visible. (12-13) All the oceans are turbulent and mountains are being riven. The earth is quaking and the wind is blowing violently at this time. (14) We are at a loss to discover its remedy, O holy sir! Like unbelievers people are giving up their sacred duties. With their mind deeply agitated (all) the three worlds are puzzled. (15) Nay, the sun stands totally eclipsed by the glory of that great Ṛṣi. The great sage (Viśwāmitra), who is fire personified, endowed as he is with unique splendour, O venerable sir, deserves to be propitiated before he sets his mind on (wholesale) destruction. (Even) as all the three worlds were consumed by the fire of universal destruction in the past (at the time of universal dissolution), they may likewise be burnt by him. (Therefore) let that (very) boon be vouchsafed to him, on which his mind is set, even if he seeks to rule over the gods."

ततः सुरगणाः सर्वे पितामहपुरोगमाः ॥१८॥
विश्वामित्रं महात्मानं वाक्यं मधुरमब्रुवन् । ब्रह्मर्षे स्वागतं तेऽस्तु तपसा स्म सुतोषिताः ॥१९॥
ब्राह्मण्यं तपसोग्रेण प्राप्तवानसि कौशिक । दीर्घमायुश्च ते ब्रह्मन् ददामि समरुद्गणः ॥२०॥
स्वस्ति प्राप्नुहि भद्रं ते गच्छ सौम्य यथासुखम् । पितामहवचः श्रुत्वा सर्वेषां त्रिदिवौकसाम् ॥२१॥
कृत्वा प्रणामं मुदितो व्याजहार महामुनिः । ब्राह्मण्यं यदि मे प्राप्तं दीर्घमायुस्तथैव च ॥२२॥
ओँकारोऽथ वषट्कारो वेदाश्च वरयन्तु माम् । क्षत्रवेदविदां श्रेष्ठो ब्रह्मवेदविदामपि ॥२३॥
ब्रह्मपुत्रो वसिष्ठो मामेवं वदतु देवताः । यद्येवं परमः कामः कृतो यान्तु सुरर्षभाः ॥२४॥

Thereupon all the hosts of gods with Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation) at their head (called on and) addressed the following sweet words to the high-souled Viśwāmitra:—"Hail to you, O Brahman Ṛṣi! We are highly pleased with your asceticism. (16—19) You have attained Brahmanhood by virtue of your severe austerities, O son of Kuśika! Accompanied by hosts of gods, O holy Brahman, I further confer longevity on you. (20) Enjoy blessedness and depart according to your pleasure. May good betide you!" Pleased to hear the benediction of Brahmā and offering salutation to all the gods (*lit.*, denizens of heaven), the great sage (Viśwāmitra) said, "If Brahmanhood as well as long life has been secured by me, let the mystic syllable OM (the key to Self-Knowledge), the (sacred) word 'Vaṣaṭ' (which is used after the name of the deity to whom an oblation is made at a sacrifice, while pouring an oblation into the sacrificial fire) and the Vedas (which furnish us with details of Self-Knowledge as well as of ritual acts) seek me of their own accord. Let Vasiṣṭha, (a mind-born) son of Brahmā (the creator), the foremost among the masters of the science of archery etc. (the sciences mastered by the Kṣatriyas) as well as of those mastered by the Brahmans (*viz*, the four Vedas, including the Upaniṣads, that treat of Brahma, the Infinite), call me as such (a Brahman), O gods! If this supreme desire of mine is granted by you, depart (then), O jewels among gods!" (2—24)

ततः प्रसादितो देवैर्वसिष्ठो जपतां वरः । सख्यं चकार ब्रह्मर्षिरेवमस्त्विति चाब्रवीत् ॥२५॥
ब्रह्मर्षिस्त्वं न संदेहः सर्वं सम्पद्यते तव । इत्युक्त्वा देवताश्चापि सर्वा जग्मुर्यथागतम् ॥२६॥
विश्वामित्रोऽपि धर्मात्मा लब्ध्वा ब्राह्मण्यमुत्तमम् । पूजयामास ब्रह्मर्षिं वसिष्ठं जपतां वरम् ॥२७॥

कृतकामो महीं सर्वां चचार तपसि स्थितः । एवं त्वनेन ब्राह्मण्यं प्राप्तं राम महात्मना ॥२८॥
एष राम मुनिश्रेष्ठ एष विग्रहवांस्तपः । एष धर्मः परो नित्यं वीर्यस्यैष परायणम् ॥२९॥
एवमुक्त्वा महातेजा विरराम द्विजोत्तमः । शतानन्दवचः श्रुत्वा रामलक्ष्मणसंनिधौ ॥३०॥
जनकः प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यमुवाच कुशिकात्मजम् ।

Conciliated by the gods, Vasiṣṭha, a Brahman sage, the foremost among ascetics, thereupon made friends with Viśwāmitra and said, "Amen !" (25) "You are a Brahman seer no doubt. Every desire of your stands fulfilled !" Saying so, the gods too returned (each to his own abode in heaven) as they had come. (26) Having attained the highest status of a Brahman, the pious Viśwāmitra too paid his homage to Vasiṣṭha, a Brahman sage and the foremost among ascetics. (27) Having realized his ambition (of being recognized as a Brahman) and remaining devoted to his austerities, he traversed the entire globe. In this way, O Rāma, was Brahmanhood actually attained (in this very birth without changing his body) by the high-minded Viśwāmitra. (28) He is the foremost among sages, O Rāma ! He is asceticism incarnate. He is supreme virtue personified; (nay) he is the highest and perennial abode of prowess." (29) Saying so, the highly glorious Śatānanda (the foremost among Brahmans) became silent. Hearing the narration of Śatānanda, King Janaka spoke to Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika) with joined palms in the presence of Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa as follows:—

धन्योऽस्म्यनुगृहीतोऽस्मि यस्य मे मुनिपुंगव ॥३१॥
यज्ञं काकुत्स्थसहितः प्राप्तवानसि कौशिक । पावितोऽहं त्वया ब्रह्मन् दर्शनेन महामुने ॥३२॥
गुणा बहुविधाः प्राप्तास्तव संदर्शनान्मया । विस्तरेण च वै ब्रह्मन् कीर्त्यमानं महत्तपः ॥३३॥
श्रुतं मया महातेजो रामेण च महात्मना । सदस्यैः प्राप्य च सदः श्रुतास्ते बहवो गुणाः ॥३४॥
अप्रमेयं तपस्तुभ्यमप्रमेयं च ते बलम् । अप्रमेया गुणाश्चैव नित्यं ते कुशिकात्मज ॥३५॥
तृप्तिराश्चर्यभूतानां कथानां नास्ति मे विभो । कर्मकालो मुनिश्रेष्ठ लम्बते रविमण्डलम् ॥३६॥
श्वः प्रभाते महातेजो द्रष्टुमर्हसि मां पुनः । स्वागतं जपतां श्रेष्ठ मामनुज्ञातुमर्हसि ॥३७॥
एवमुक्तो मुनिवरः प्रशस्य पुरुषर्षभम् । विससर्जाशु जनकं प्रीतं प्रीतमनास्तदा ॥३८॥
एवमुक्त्वा मुनिश्रेष्ठं वैदेहो मिथिलाधिपः । प्रदक्षिणं चकाराशु सोपाध्यायः सबान्धवः ॥३९॥
विश्वामित्रोऽपि धर्मात्मा सहरामः सलक्ष्मणः । स्ववासमभिचक्राम पूज्यमानो महात्मभिः ॥४०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे पञ्चषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६५ ॥

"I am blessed and stand beholden to you, O jewel among sages, in that you have paid a visit to my sacrifice along with Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Kakutstha), O son of Kuśika ! I stand hallowed, O holy Brahman, by your sight, O great sage ! (30—32) Manifold benefits have been derived by me through your sight at close quarters, inasmuch as on joining this sacrificial assembly with my counsellors (today) the story of your many great austerities as well as an account of your many virtues as being told at length (by Śatānanda) has been heard by me, O highly glorious Brahman, as well as by the high-souled Śrī Rāma. (33-34) Unfathomable is your asceticism and immeasurable is your strength. And ever incalculable indeed are your excellences, O son of Kuśika ! (35) I find no satiety in hearing your marvellous stories, O powerful sage ! The hour of religious rites (to be gone through at dusk), however, is drawing near; the sun is declining, O jewel among sages ! (36) Tomorrow morning, O highly glorious sage, be pleased to meet me again. Welcome is your advent (to my capital), O jewel among ascetics ! Kindly grant me leave (to depart)." (37) Viśwāmitra (the foremost of sages) felt delighted in his mind on that occasion when addressed in these words. Extolling Janaka, who was all love, he soon allowed that jewel among men to go. (38) Having addressed Viśwāmitra (the foremost of sages) as aforesaid, King Janaka (of the Videha dynasty), the ruler of Mithilā, along with his family priest and relations quickly went round him clockwise (and departed). (39) Accompanied by Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, Viśwāmitra too, whose mind is (ever) given to piety, retired to his camp, being extolled (even as he went) by the exalted souls (that had followed him). (40)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-five in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षट्षष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXVI

On Viśwāmitra apprising Janaka of the eagerness of Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa to see his famous bow, Janaka reveals to him its glory and tells him how he got it as well as Sītā and also of his pledge to give her in marriage to Śrī Rāma if he should string it.

ततः प्रभाते विमले कृतकर्मा नराधिपः । विश्वामित्रं महात्मानमाजुहाव सराघवम् ॥ १ ॥
तमर्चयित्वा धर्मात्मा शास्त्रदृष्टेन कर्मणा । राघवौ च महात्मानौ तदा वाक्यमुवाच ह ॥ २ ॥
भगवन् स्वागतं तेऽस्तु किं करोमि तवानघ । भवानाज्ञापयतु मामाज्ञाप्यो भवता ह्यहम् ॥ ३ ॥
एवमुक्तः स धर्मात्मा जनकेन महात्मना । प्रत्युवाच मुनिश्रेष्ठो वाक्यं वाक्यविशारदः ॥ ४ ॥
पुत्रौ दशरथस्येमौ क्षत्रियौ लोकविश्रुतौ । द्रष्टुकामौ धनुःश्रेष्ठं यदेतत्त्वयि तिष्ठति ॥ ५ ॥
एतद् दर्शय भद्रं ते कृतकामौ नृपात्मजौ । दर्शनादस्य धनुषो यथेष्टं प्रतियास्यतः ॥ ६ ॥
एवमुक्तस्तु जनकः प्रत्युवाच महामुनिम् ।

Having concluded his religious rites (for the morning), Janaka (a ruler of men) sent for the high-souled Viśwāmitra along with Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Raghu) when the day had clearly dawned the next day. (1) Having honoured him as well as the high-souled Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Raghu) by means of rites prescribed in our sacred books, the pious soul then spoke to him as follows : so the tradition goes :—(2) "Hail to you, O venerable sir ! Instruct me you what I can do for you, O sinless one, since I deserve to be commanded by you." (3) Addressed in these words by the high-souled Janaka, the pious and celebrated Viśwāmitra (a jewel among sages), a master of expression, replied as follows :—(4) "These two Kṣatriya princes, sons of Emperor Daśaratha, who are well-known throughout the world, are eager to see the superb bow which now exists with you. (5) (Please) show it (to them); may good betide you ! With their desire fulfilled through the sight of this bow the two princes will return as they would." (6) Urged in these words, Janaka for his part replied (as follows) to Viśwāmitra (the eminent sage):—

श्रूयतामस्य धनुषो यदर्थमिह तिष्ठति ॥ ७ ॥
देवरात इति ख्यातो निमेर्ज्येष्ठो महीपतिः । न्यासोऽयं तस्य भगवन् हस्ते दत्तो महात्मनः ॥ ८ ॥
दक्षयज्ञवधे पूर्वं धनुरायम्य वीर्यवान् । रुद्रस्तु त्रिदशान् रोषात् सलीलमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ९ ॥
यस्माद् भागार्थिनो भागं नाकल्पयत मे सुराः । वराङ्गानि महार्हाणि धनुषा शातयामि वः ॥१०॥
ततो विमनसः सर्वे देवा वै मुनिपुंगव । प्रसादयन्त देवेशं तेषां प्रीतोऽभवद् भवः ॥११॥
प्रीतियुक्तस्तु सर्वेषां ददौ तेषां महात्मनाम् । तदेतद् देवदेवस्य धनूरत्नं महात्मनः ॥१२॥
न्यासभूतं तदा न्यस्तमस्माकं पूर्वजे विभौ ।

"Hear the tale of this bow, wherefore it lies here (in my charge). (7) Nimi's eldest son was known as King Devarāta. This bow, O venerable sage, was deposited as a trust in the hands of that exalted soul (by the gods). (8) Pulling the string of this bow in sport with the purpose of wrecking the sacrifice of Dakṣa in the olden days, the valiant Lord Rudra (the god of destruction) for his part angrily spoke to the gods (as follows):— (9) "Since you have not set apart a share (of the sacrificial offerings) for me, even though I desired it, O gods, I shall (just) sever your most adorable heads with this bow (and arrow)." (10) Getting discomposed, all the gods thereupon conciliated Lord Śankara (the suzerain Ruler of gods) O jewel among sages, and Śiva (the Source of the universe) got eventually pleased with them. (11) Full of grace, He bestowed the bow upon all those high-souled gods. Then that celebrated jewel among bows was deposited (by them) as a trust with our powerful forefather (Devarāta).

अथ मे कृषतः क्षेत्रं लाङ्गलादुत्थिता ततः ॥१३॥
क्षेत्रं शोधयता लब्धा नाम्ना सीतेति विश्रुता । भूतलादुत्थिता सा तु व्यवर्धत ममात्मजा ॥१४॥
वीर्यशुल्केति मे कन्या स्थापितेयमयोनिजा । भूतलादुत्थितां तां तु वर्धमानां ममात्मजाम् ॥१५॥
वरयामासुरागत्य राजानो मुनिपुंगव । तेषां वरयतां कन्यां सर्वेषां पृथिवीक्षिताम् ॥१६॥
वीर्यशुल्केति भगवन् न ददामि सुतामहम् । ततः सर्वे नृपतयः समेत्य मुनिपुंगव ॥१७॥
मिथिलामप्युपागम्य वीर्यं जिज्ञासवस्तदा । तेषां जिज्ञासमानानां शैवं धनुरुपाहृतम् ॥१८॥
न शेकुर्ग्रहणे तस्य धनुषस्तोलनेऽपि वा । तेषां वीर्यवतां वीर्यमल्पं ज्ञात्वा महामुने ॥१९॥
प्रत्याख्याता नृपतयस्तन्निबोध तपोधन ।

"Immediately after that there arose from the track of the ploughshare, (even) as I was ploughing the plot set apart for a sacrifice, a female baby, who, was discovered while dressing the field and (as such) was widely known by the name of Sītā*. That (foster-) daughter of mine, who had emerged from the soil, gradually grew at an extraordinary pace (in my care). (12—14) This daughter of mine, who was not born (in the ordinary way) from the (mother's) womb, was kept by me for being given in marriage to a suitor who would win her by his valour. Rulers of lands approached me and sued for (the hand of) my aforesaid daughter, who had appeared from the soil and was growing (at an unusual pace), O jewel among sages! I (however) did not give away my daughter to any, telling all the kings who sued for (the hand of) my girl that she could (only) be won through (personal) valour. Thereupon all the kings (*lit.*, rulers of men) came to Mithilā in a body and inquired of the standard by which their prowess was going to be judged, O jewel among sages! Then the bow of Lord Śiva was brought before the inquisitive princes. (15—18) They (however) could not even support it, much less toss it (in order to be able to ascertain its weight). Perceiving (as I did) the prowess of those princes, who claimed (great) prowess, to be deficient, O eminent sage, those rulers of men were rejected (by me). (Now) hear what they did next, O sage rich in asceticism!

---

* The word 'Sītā' in Sanskrit originally conveyed the sense of the furrow of a ploughshare.

ततः परमकोपेन राजानो मुनिपुंगव ॥२०॥
अरुन्धन् मिथिलां सर्वे वीर्यसंदेहमागताः । आत्मानमवधूतं मे विज्ञाय नृपपुंगवाः ॥२१॥
रोषेण महताऽऽविष्टाः पीडयन् मिथिलां पुरीम् । ततः संवत्सरे पूर्णे क्षयं यातानि सर्वशः ॥२२॥
साधनानि मुनिश्रेष्ठ ततोऽहं भृशदुःखितः । ततो देवगणान् सर्वांस्तपसाहं प्रसादयम् ॥२३॥
ददुश्च परमप्रीताश्चतुरङ्गबलं सुराः । ततो भग्ना नृपतयो हन्यमाना दिशो ययुः ॥२४॥
अवीर्या वीर्यसंदिग्धाः सामात्याः पापकारिणः । तदेतन्मुनिशार्दूल धनुः परमभास्वरम् ॥२५॥
रामलक्ष्मणयोश्चापि दर्शयिष्यामि सुव्रत ।
यद्यस्य धनुषो रामः कुर्यादारोपणं मुने । सुतामयोनिजां सीतां दद्यां दाशरथेरहम् ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे षट्षष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६६ ॥

"Their prowess having been called in question, all the kings in extreme anger thereupon besieged Mithilā, O jewel among sages! Considering themselves as insulted by me and (therefore) filled with great anger, those jewels among kings inflicted suffering on the city of Mithilā. Consequent on that siege, at the end of a full twelvemonth all my resources got depleted, O jewel among sages! As a result of that I felt very wretched. Thereupon I propitiated through askesis all the hosts of gods. (19—23) Nay, extremely pleased, the gods conferred on me an army complete in all its four limbs (*viz*, the horse, elephants, chariots and infantry). Being hard hit by that army and completely routed, the villainous kings, who lacked in valour or whose prowess was called in question thereupon fled with their ministers in various directions. I shall certainly show the aforesaid most resplendent and celebrated bow, O tiger among ascetics, to Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa as well, O sage of noble vows! If Rāma strings this bow, O sage, I promise to give away my daughter, Sītā, who was not born of a (mother's) womb, to the (aforesaid) son of Daśaratha." (24—26)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-six in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

सप्तषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXVII

Urged by Viśwāmitra, Śrī Rāma bends the bow, sent by Janaka to the sacrificial hall, in order to string it and in the process breaks it, whereupon Janaka with the concurrence of Viśwāmitra sends his counsellors to Ayodhya to invite Emperor Daśaratha for the wedding.

जनकस्य वचः श्रुत्वा विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । धनुर्दर्शय रामाय इति होवाच पार्थिवम् ॥ १ ॥
ततः स राजा जनकः सचिवान् व्यादिदेश ह । धनुरानीयतां दिव्यं गन्धमाल्यानुलेपितम् ॥ २ ॥
जनकेन समादिष्टाः सचिवाः प्राविशन् पुरम् । तद्धनुः पुरतः कृत्वा निर्जग्मुरमितौजसः ॥ ३ ॥
नृणां शतानि पञ्चाशद् व्यायतानां महात्मनाम् । मञ्जूषामष्टचक्रां तां समूहुस्ते कथंचन ॥ ४ ॥
तामादाय सुमञ्जूषामायसीं यत्र तद् धनुः । सुरोपमं ते जनकमूचुर्नृपतिमन्त्रिणः ॥ ५ ॥
इदं धनुर्वरं राजन् पूजितं सर्वराजभिः । मिथिलाधिप राजेन्द्र दर्शनीयं यदीच्छसि ॥ ६ ॥

Hearing the narration of Janaka, the eminent sage Viśwāmitra, so the tradition goes, said to the (aforesaid) king, "(Please) show the bow to Rāma." (1) Thereupon the celebrated King Janaka gladly instructed (as follows) his counsellors (sitting by his side):—"Let the heavenly bow, adorned with sandal-paste and flowers, be brought (here)." (2) Commanded by Janaka, his counsellors, who were possessed of immense glory, entered the city and, placing the bow at their head, came out (of the city). (3) Five thousand unusually tall and well-built men somehow managed to propel the chest containing the bow, mounted on eight wheels. (4) Taking (with them) that iron chest of good design, in which the said bow had been placed, those counsellors of the king said to Janaka, who resembled a god (in lustre):—(5) "This superb bow, O king, which is worshipped by all the kings, may (kindly) be shown (to Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) if you will, O ruler of Mithilā, O king of kings !" (6)

तेषां नृपो वचः श्रुत्वा कृताञ्जलिरभाषत । विश्वामित्रं महात्मानं तावुभौ रामलक्ष्मणौ ॥ ७ ॥
इदं धनुर्वरं ब्रह्मन् जनकैरभिपूजितम् । राजभिश्च महावीर्यैरशक्तैः पूरितं तदा ॥ ८ ॥
नैतत् सुरगणाः सर्वे सासुरा न च राक्षसाः । गन्धर्वयक्षप्रवराः सकिंनरमहोरगाः ॥ ९ ॥
क्व गतिर्मानुषाणां च धनुषोऽस्य प्रपूरणे । आरोपणे समायोगे वेपने तोलने तथा ॥१०॥
तदेतद् धनुषां श्रेष्ठमानीतं मुनिपुंगव । दर्शयैतन्महाभाग अनयो राजपुत्रयोः ॥११॥

Hearing their prayer, the king submitted with joined palms to the high-souled Viśwāmitra and both the aforesaid princes, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa :—(7) "This excellent bow, O holy Brahman, has been worshipped by the Janakas and extolled by kings who were unable to bend it at that time, though they were very powerful. (8) Not even hosts of gods including demons nor ogres nor the foremost of Gandharvas and Yakṣas including Kinnaras and great Nāgas are able to string it. How

(then) can there be any capacity in (poor) human beings to bend this bow, string it, fit an arrow to it, vibrate its string and (toss it in their palms in order to) estimate its weight ? (9-10) This bow, the best of all, has been brought (before you), O jewel among sages ! (Kindly) show it (now), O highly blessed one, to these two princes." (11)

विश्वामित्रः सरामस्तु श्रुत्वा जनकभाषितम् । वत्स राम धनुः पश्य इति राघवमब्रवीत् ॥१२॥
महर्षेर्वचनाद् रामो यत्र तिष्ठति तद् धनुः । मञ्जूषां तामपावृत्य दृष्ट्वा धनुरथाब्रवीत् ॥१३॥
इदं धनुर्वरं दिव्यं संस्पृशामीह पाणिना । यत्नवांश्च भविष्यामि तोलने पूरणेऽपि वा ॥१४॥
बाढमित्यब्रवीद् राजा मुनिश्च समभाषत । लीलया स धनुर्मध्ये जग्राह वचनान्मुनेः ॥१५॥
पश्यतां नृसहस्राणां बहूनां रघुनन्दनः । आरोपयत् स धर्मात्मा सलीलमिव तद्धनुः ॥१६॥
आरोपयित्वा मौर्वीं च पूरयामास तद्धनुः । तद् बभञ्ज धनुर्मध्ये नरश्रेष्ठो महायशाः ॥१७॥
तस्य शब्दो महानासीन्निर्घातसमनिःस्वनः । भूमिकम्पश्च सुमहान् पर्वतस्येव दीर्यतः ॥१८॥
निपेतुश्च नराः सर्वे तेन शब्देन मोहिताः । वर्जयित्वा मुनिवरं राजानं तौ च राघवौ ॥१९॥
प्रत्याश्वस्ते जने तस्मिन् राजा विगतसाध्वसः । उवाच प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यं वाक्यज्ञो मुनिपुंगवम् ॥२०॥

Hearing the request of Janaka along with Śrī Rāma, Viśwāmitra spoke to the latter (as follows) :—"Child Rāma, behold the bow !" (12) Opening at the instance of Viśwāmitra (the eminent seer) the chest in which the famous bow lay encased, and beholding the bow, Śrī Rāma forthwith said :— (13) "I hereby hold with my hand this excellent heavenly bow and shall try to toss it on my palms and even to bend it." (14) "Amen !" said the king and the sage (too) dittoed the remark. At the instance of the sage Śrī Rāma sportfully seized the bow at the middle. (15) (Nay) the celebrated scion of Raghu, whose mind is given to righteousness, strung that bow as though in sport while many thousands of men stood looking on. (16) Having set the string to the bow, the highly illustrious Śrī Rāma (a jewel among men) bent the said bow and (lo !) the bow broke into two at the middle. (17) A great noise reverberating like a crash of thunder issued from it (even as it broke) and a violent earthquake followed (in its wake) as it would in the event of a mountain cracking. (18) Nay, stunned by that crash all men (present there) toppled down, barring (of course) Viśwāmitra (the foremost of sages), the king and the two celebrated scions of Raghu. (19) On the people there (recovering from the shock and) feeling reassured, the king, whose misgivings had now been set at rest, and who knew how to speak, submitted with joined palms to Viśwāmitra (the foremost of sages) as follows :—(20)

भगवन् दृष्टवीर्यो मे रामो दशरथात्मजः । अत्यद्भुतमचिन्त्यं च अतर्कितमिदं मया ॥२१॥
जनकानां कुले कीर्तिमाहरिष्यति मे सुता । सीता भर्तारमासाद्य रामं दशरथात्मजम् ॥२२॥
मम सत्या प्रतिज्ञा सा वीर्यशुल्केति कौशिक । सीता प्राणैर्बहुमता देया रामाय मे सुता ॥२३॥
भवतोऽनुमते ब्रह्मन् शीघ्रं गच्छन्तु मन्त्रिणः । मम कौशिक भद्रं ते अयोध्यां त्वरिता रथैः ॥२४॥
राजानं प्रश्रितैर्वाक्यैरानयन्तु पुरं मम । प्रदानं वीर्यशुल्कायाः कथयन्तु च सर्वशः ॥२५॥
मुनिगुप्तौ च काकुत्स्थौ कथयन्तु नृपाय वै । प्रीतियुक्तं तु राजानमानयन्तु सुशीघ्रगाः ॥२६॥
कौशिकस्तु तथेत्याह राजा चाभाष्य मन्त्रिणः ।
अयोध्यां प्रेषयामास धर्मात्मा कृतशासनान् । यथावृत्तं समाख्यातुमानेतुं च नृपं तथा ॥२७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे सप्तषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६७ ॥

"The prowess of Śrī Rāma, son of Daśaratha, has been witnessed by me. The feat (performed by him) is most marvellous, inconceivable and was never thought of by me. (21) Having secured Śrī Rāma, son of Emperor Daśaratha, for her husband, my daughter, Sītā, will fetch renown to the race of the Janakas. (22) My pledge that Sītā can be won only through valour stands redeemed (today), O son of Kuśika! My daughter, Sītā, who is dearer (to me) than life, (now) remains to be given away. (23) With your permission, O holy Brahman, let my counsellors quickly proceed, O son of Kuśika, to Ayodhya in chariots with expedition; may God bless you! (24) Let them with polite words bring the emperor to my capital and tell him exhaustively how Sītā having been won through valour is going to be given away (to Śrī Rāma). (25) Let them also speak of the two scions of Kakutstha being well looked after by the sage (yourself) and let them bring the emperor, full of delight, poste-haste (to Mithilā)." (26) The son of Kuśika for his part said, "Amen!" And, summoning his counsellors, the pious king despatched them with instructions to narrate at length everything precisely as it had happened, as well as to bring the emperor (to Mithilā). (27)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-seven in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXVIII

Reaching Ayodhya, the counsellors of Janaka tell Daśaratha how Śrī Rāma broke the bow of Janaka and won the hand of his daughter, and convey to him their master's invitation for the wedding, on which Daśaratha makes up his mind in consultation with Vasiṣṭha to depart for Mithilā at an early date.

जनकेन समादिष्टा दूतास्ते क्लान्तवाहनाः । त्रिरात्रमुषिता मार्गे तेऽयोध्यां प्राविशन् पुरीम् ॥ १ ॥
ते राजवचनाद् गत्वा राजवेश्म प्रवेशिताः । ददृशुर्देवसंकाशं वृद्धं दशरथं नृपम् ॥ २ ॥
बद्धाञ्जलिपुटाः सर्वे दूता विगतसाध्वसाः । राजानं प्रश्रितं वाक्यमब्रुवन् मधुराक्षरम् ॥ ३ ॥
मैथिलो जनको राजा साग्निहोत्रपुरस्कृतः । मुहुर्मुहुर्मधुरया स्नेहसंरक्तया गिरा ॥ ४ ॥
कुशलं चाव्ययं चैव सोपाध्यायपुरोहितम् । जनकस्त्वां महाराज पृच्छते सपुरस्सरम् ॥ ५ ॥
पृष्ट्वा कुशलमव्यग्रं वैदेहो मिथिलाधिपः । कौशिकानुमते वाक्यं भवन्तमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ६ ॥

Commanded by Janaka, the aforesaid (counsellors sent as) envoys halted for three days on the way, their horses being exhausted, and then they entered the city of Ayodhya. (1) Proceeding to the royal palace, they were ushered into the court under orders of the king and beheld (there) the aged King Daśaratha, who looked like a god. (2) All the envoys, whose feeling of awe had altogether disappeared (thanks to the benign look and amiable disposition of Daśaratha), made the following polite and sweetly-worded submission to the king :—(3) "With the sacred fire placed before him and in a polite language imbued with affection, O monarch, King Janaka, the ruler of Mithilā and a source of happiness to his people, has again and again inquired after your undying welfare (through our mouth), as also after that of your preceptor and family priest as well as of your attendants. (4-5) Inquiring after your undisturbed welfare, King Janaka (of the Videha dynasty), the ruler of Mithilā, has with the consent of Viśwāmitra (son of Kuśika) sent you the following message :—(6)

पूर्वं प्रतिज्ञा विदिता वीर्यशुल्का ममात्मजा । राजानश्च कृतामर्षा निर्वीर्या विमुखीकृताः ॥ ७ ॥
सेयं मम सुता राजन् विश्वामित्रपुरस्कृतैः । यदृच्छयाऽऽगतै राजन् निर्जिता तव पुत्रकैः ॥ ८ ॥
तच्च रत्नं धनुर्दिव्यं मध्ये भग्नं महात्मना । रामेण हि महाबाहो महत्यां जनसंसदि ॥ ९ ॥
अस्मै देया मया सीता वीर्यशुल्का महात्मने । प्रतिज्ञां तर्तुमिच्छामि तदनुज्ञातुमर्हसि ॥१०॥
सोपाध्यायो महाराज पुरोहितपुरस्कृतः । शीघ्रमागच्छ भद्रं ते द्रष्टुमर्हसि राघवौ ॥११॥
प्रतिज्ञां मम राजेन्द्र निर्वर्तयितुमर्हसि । पुत्रयोरुभयोरेव प्रीतिं त्वमुपलप्स्यसे ॥१२॥
एवं विदेहाधिपतिर्मधुरं वाक्यमब्रवीत् । विश्वामित्राभ्यनुज्ञातः शतानन्दमते स्थितः ॥१३॥

'My pledge that my daughter shall be won (only) through valour must already be known to you, as also the fact that kings lacking in strength (that could enable them to pass the test) were repulsed, even though they resented it. (7) This celebrated daughter of mine, O illustrious king, has been decisively won by your beloved and worthy son (Śrī Rāma), arrived through my good luck (at my capital) with the sage Viśwāmitra as his guide. (8) Nay, that superb heavenly bow (of Lord Śiva) was actually broken at the middle by the high-souled Śrī Rāma in the midst of a huge concourse of men, O long-armed one ! (9) Sītā (my daughter), who has (thus) been won through (personal) valour, (now) remains to be given away by me to that exalted soul. (By doing so) I seek to redeem my pledge. Be pleased to sanction it. (10) Accompanied by your preceptor and placing the family priest at your head, O great king, come soon and be pleased to behold Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Raghu); may God bless you ! (11) You ought to bring my pledge to completion, O king of kings ! (In this way) you will witness the joyous mood of both your sons.' (12) Seconded by Viśwāmitra and abiding by the advice of Śatānanda, the ruler of the Videha territory has addressed such sweet words to you." (13)

दूतवाक्यं तु तच्छ्रुत्वा राजा परमहर्षितः । वसिष्ठं वामदेवं च मन्त्रिणश्चैवमब्रवीत् ॥१४॥
गुप्तः कुशिकपुत्रेण कौसल्यानन्दवर्धनः । लक्ष्मणेन सह भ्रात्रा विदेहेषु वसत्यसौ ॥१५॥
दृष्टवीर्यस्तु काकुत्स्थो जनकेन महात्मना । सम्प्रदानं सुतायास्तु राघवे कर्तुमिच्छति ॥१६॥
यदि वो रोचते वृत्तं जनकस्य महात्मनः । पुरीं गच्छामहे शीघ्रं मा भूत् कालस्य पर्ययः ॥१७॥
मन्त्रिणो बाढमित्याहुः सह सर्वैर्महर्षिभिः । सुप्रीतश्चाब्रवीद् राजा श्वो यात्रेति च मन्त्रिणः ॥१८॥
मन्त्रिणस्तु नरेन्द्रस्य रात्रिं परमसत्कृताः । ऊषुः प्रमुदिताः सर्वे गुणैः सर्वैः समन्विताः ॥१९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डेऽष्टषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६८ ॥

Supremely delighted to hear the aforesaid submission of the envoys (of Janaka), the king (Daśaratha) addressed the sages Vasiṣṭha and Vāmadeva as well as his counsellors in the following words :—(14) "Looked after by Viśwāmitra

(son of Kuśika), Śrī Rāma, who enhances the joy of Kausalyā (by his presence) is sojourning (at present) in the kingdom of the Videhas along with his brother, Lakṣmaṇa. (15) The prowess of Śrī Rāma (the ornament of Kakutstha's race) has been witnessed by the high-souled Janaka, who accordingly desires to give away his daughter to Śrī Rāma (a jewel of Raghu's race). (16) If the family history and the mode of life of the high-souled Janaka commends itself to you, let us proceed at once to his capital (Mithilā) and let there be no loss of time." (17) The counsellors will all the great seers said, "Amen !" And highly pleased, the king (Daśaratha) too said to the counsellors, "Let the journey be undertaken tomorrow." (18) Greatly delighted (to hear of the king's decision) and highly honoured (by Daśaratha), all the counsellors of King Janaka, who were richly endowed with all excellences (befitting a king's counsellor), halted for the night (at Ayodhya). (19)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-eight in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकोनसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXIX

With a large number of followers Daśaratha proceeds to Mithilā for the wedding and is received with signal honour by Janaka and his people and comfortably lodged.

ततो रात्र्यां व्यतीतायां सोपाध्यायः सबान्धवः । राजा दशरथो हृष्टः सुमन्त्रमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
अद्य सर्वे धनाध्यक्षा धनमादाय पुष्कलम् । व्रजन्त्वग्रे सुविहिता नानारत्नसमन्विताः ॥ २ ॥
चतुरङ्गबलं चापि शीघ्रं निर्यातु सर्वशः । ममाज्ञासमकालं च यानं युग्यमनुत्तमम् ॥ ३ ॥
वसिष्ठो वामदेवश्च जाबालिरथ कश्यपः । मार्कण्डेयस्तु दीर्घायुर्ऋषिः कात्यायनस्तथा ॥ ४ ॥
एते द्विजाः प्रयान्त्वग्रे स्यन्दनं योजयस्व मे । यथा कालात्ययो न स्याद् दूता हि त्वरयन्ति माम् ॥ ५ ॥
वचनाच्च नरेन्द्रस्य सेना च चतुरङ्गिणी । राजानमृषिभिः सार्धं व्रजन्तं पृष्ठतोऽन्वयात् ॥ ६ ॥
गत्वा चतुरहं मार्गं विदेहानभ्युपेयिवान् । राजा च जनकः श्रीमाञ्छ्रुत्वा पूजामकल्पयत् ॥ ७ ॥
ततो राजानमासाद्य वृद्धं दशरथं नृपम् । मुदितो जनको राजा प्रहर्षं परमं ययौ ॥ ८ ॥
उवाच वचनं श्रेष्ठो नरश्रेष्ठं मुदान्वितम् ।

Then, on the night being over, King Daśaratha, who was closeted with his preceptor and relations, joyously (summoned and) addressed Sumantra (his favourite and trusted minister) as follows :—(1) "Taking (with them) abundant riches and richly provided with various kinds of precious stones and duly protected (by armed guards), let all treasury officers proceed ahead today. (2) Let the army consisting of all its four limbs (*viz*, the horse, chariots, elephants and infantry) sally forth, as soon as they receive my order, as also the whole lot of palanquins etc. as well as other conveyances (chariots etc.) of a superb type. (3) Let these Brahmans—Vasiṣṭha and Vāmadeva as well as Jābāli, Kaśyapa as also the long-lived Mārkaṇḍeya and Sage Kātyāyana go ahead (in palanquins or chariots); and (also) get ready my chariot so that there may be no delay, since the envoys are urging me to make haste." (4-5) In pursuance of the royal command the army consisting of (all) its four limbs marched close behind the king (himself) driving along with the sages (each in his own conveyance). (6) Driving along the road for four days, he entered the territory of the Videhas. The moment the glorious King Janaka heard of his advent he set about preparing for his reception. (7) Then, approaching the aged King Daśaratha, a protector of men, King Janaka, (already) full of joy, experienced supreme felicity. (8) The extremely noble Janaka submitted as follows to the delighted Daśaratha (the foremost among men):—

स्वागतं ते नरश्रेष्ठ दिष्ट्या प्राप्तोऽसि राघव ॥ ९ ॥
पुत्रयोरुभयोः प्रीतिं लप्स्यसे वीर्यनिर्जिताम् । दिष्ट्या प्राप्तो महातेजा वसिष्ठो भगवानृषिः ॥१०॥
सह सर्वैर्द्विजश्रेष्ठैर्देवैरिव शतक्रतुः । दिष्ट्या मे निर्जिता विघ्ना दिष्ट्या मे पूजितं कुलम् ॥११॥
राघवैः सह सम्बन्धाद् वीर्यश्रेष्ठैर्महाबलैः । श्वः प्रभाते नरेन्द्र त्वं संवर्तयितुमर्हसि ॥१२॥
यज्ञस्यान्ते नरश्रेष्ठ विवाहमृषिसत्तमैः । तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा ऋषिमध्ये नराधिपः ॥१३॥
वाक्यं वाक्यविदां श्रेष्ठः प्रत्युवाच महीपतिम् । प्रतिग्रहो दातृवशः श्रुतमेतन्मया पुरा ॥१४॥
यथा वक्ष्यसि धर्मज्ञ तत् करिष्यामहे वयम् ।

"Welcome is your advent (to my capital), O jewel among men! It is through my good luck that you have come, O scion of Raghu! (9) You will witness (here) the joyous mood of both your sons (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), acquired through personal prowess. It is through my good fortune (again) that the highly glorious and exceedingly powerful sage Vasiṣṭha has come along with all the jewels among Brahmaṇs (even) as Indra (who attained the rulership of gods by virtue of his having performed a full one hundred horse-sacrifices in his past life) would in the company of gods. Fortunately enough (all) obstacles (that stood in the way of Sita's marriage) have been thoroughly overcome and luckily (for me) my race has been exalted through (matrimonial) alliance with the very mighty scions of Raghu, distinguished for their valour. The following morning, at the conclusion of the sacrifice, O ruler of men, you ought to celebrate the wedding with the help of the foremost of sages, O jewel among men!" Hearing the aforesaid submission of Janaka in the midst of the Ṛṣis, Daśaratha (the paramount ruler of men), the foremost of those who know how to speak, replied (as follows) to the king (Janaka):—"(The execution of) a gift depends on the donor: this has been heard by me in the past. (10—14). We shall do as you will bid us (do), O knower of what is right!"

तत् धर्मिष्ठं यशस्यं च वचनं सत्यवादिनः ॥१५॥
श्रुत्वा विदेहाधिपतिः परं विस्मयमागतः । ततः सर्वे मुनिगणाः परस्परसमागमे ॥१६॥
हर्षेण महता युक्तास्तां रात्रिमवसन् सुखम् । अथ रामो महातेजा लक्ष्मणेन समं ययौ ॥१७॥
विश्वामित्रं पुरस्कृत्य पितुः पादावुपस्पृशन् । राजा च राघवौ पुत्रौ निशाम्य परिहर्षितः ॥१८॥
उवास परमप्रीतो जनकेनाभिपूजितः ।
जनकोऽपि महातेजाः क्रिया धर्मेण तत्त्ववित् । यज्ञस्य च सुताभ्यां च कृत्वा रात्रिमुवास ह ॥१९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकोनसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ६९ ॥

Janaka (the ruler of the territory of the Videhas) was filled with great astonishment to hear that most pious reply of the truthful monarch, which was conducive to glory. Filled with great delight at their meeting with one another, all the hosts of sages (assembled there) thereupon spent that night happily. Placing Viśwāmitra at his head, the highly glorious Śrī Rāma with Lakṣmaṇa then proceeded to touch the feet of his father. Greatly delighted to behold his two sons, the ornaments of Raghu's race, and honoured in every way by Janaka, the king (Daśaratha) retired (for the night) full of great joy. Having concluded with piety the rites connected with the sacrifice (which was being performed by him) as well as those positively conducive to the good of his two daughters (Sītā and Ūrmilā, who were now going to be married), Janaka, a knower of the truth, retired for the night: so the tradition goes. (15—19)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-nine in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXX

Janaka sends for his younger brother, Kuśadhwaja, from Sānkāśyā. Invited by him, Daśaratha meets Janaka at the latter's palace, where at the instance of Daśaratha Vasiṣṭha glorifies the race of Ikṣwāku.

ततः प्रभाते जनकः कृतकर्मा महर्षिभिः । उवाच वाक्यं वाक्यज्ञः शतानन्दं पुरोहितम् ॥ १ ॥
भ्राता मम महातेजा वीर्यवानतिधार्मिकः । कुशध्वज इति ख्यातः पुरीमध्यवसच्छुभाम् ॥ २ ॥
वार्याफलकपर्यन्तां पिबन्निक्षुमतीं नदीम् । सांकाश्यां पुण्यसंकाशां विमानमिव पुष्पकम् ॥ ३ ॥
तमहं द्रष्टुमिच्छामि यज्ञगोप्ता स मे ततः । प्रीतिं सोऽपि महातेजा इमां भोक्ता मया सह ॥ ४ ॥
एवमुक्ते तु वचने शतानन्दस्य संनिधौ । आगताः केचिदव्यग्रा जनकस्तान् समादिशत् ॥ ५ ॥

Having gone through the (concluding) rites connected with the sacrifice (undertaken by him) with the help of eminent Ṛṣis, the following morning, Janaka, who knew how to speak, spoke to his family priest, Śatānanda, as follows:—(1) "My highly glorious, valiant and extremely pious (younger) brother, known by the name of Kuśadhwaja, has taken up his abode in the blessed city of Sānkāśyā,—vying with heaven (the reward of virtue) and extensive as the aerial car Puṣpaka (belonging to Kubera, the god of riches), (nay) whose boundaries are marked out by a defensive wall mounted by engines,—and drinks the water of the river Ikṣumatī. (2-3) He is the guardian of my sacrifice (inasmuch as it is he who procured materials for the sacrifice though living in Sānkāśyā); hence I long to see him. That highly glorious brother (of mine) too will share with me this delight (of witnessing the wedding of my two daughters)." (4) When these words were uttered (by Janaka) in the presence of Śatānanda, some level-headed messengers turned up and Janaka duly instructed them. (5)

शासनात् तु नरेन्द्रस्य प्रययुः शीघ्रवाजिभिः । समानेतुं नरव्याघ्रं विष्णुमिन्द्राज्ञया यथा ॥ ६ ॥
सांकाश्यां ते समागम्य ददृशुश्च कुशध्वजम् । न्यवेदयन् यथा वृत्तं जनकस्य च चिन्तितम् ॥ ७ ॥
तद्वृत्तं नृपतिः श्रुत्वा दूतश्रेष्ठैर्महाजवैः । आज्ञया तु नरेन्द्रस्य आजगाम कुशध्वजः ॥ ८ ॥
स ददर्श महात्मानं जनकं धर्मवत्सलम् । सोऽभिवाद्य शतानन्दं जनकं चातिधार्मिकम् ॥ ९ ॥
राजार्हं परमं दिव्यमासनं चाध्यरोहत । उपविष्टावुभौ तौ तु भ्रातरावमितद्युती ॥१०॥
प्रेषयामासतुर्वीरौ मन्त्रिश्रेष्ठं सुदामनम् । गच्छ मन्त्रिपते शीघ्रमिक्ष्वाकुममितप्रभम् ॥११॥
आत्मजैः सह दुर्धर्षमानयस्व समन्त्रिणम् । औपकार्यां स गत्वा तु रघूणां कुलवर्धनम् ॥१२॥
ददर्श शिरसा चैनमभिवाद्येदमब्रवीत् । अयोध्याधिपते वीर वैदेहो मिथिलाधिपः ॥१३॥
स त्वां द्रष्टुं व्यवसितः सोपाध्यायपुरोहितम् ।

Like Indra's men proceeding under his orders to bring (his younger brother) Upendra or the divine Dwarf, they rode at the king's command on swift horses to bring Kuśadhwaja (a tiger among men). (6) Reaching Sānkāśyā they met Kuśadhwaja and correctly made known to him what had happened as well as what was contemplated by Janaka. (7) Hearing the story of Janaka as told by the foremost of his envoys, who were very swift-footed, Kuśadhwaja turned up immediately in obedience to the king's command. (8) He saw the high-souled Janaka, who was a lover of righteousness; and greeting Śatānanda as well as the most pious Janaka, he took his seat on a most wonderful throne worthy of kings. Having both sat down, the valiant brothers, who were possessed of infinite glory, (called and) commanded Sudāmana, the foremost of their counsellors, in the following words:—"Proceed quickly, O chief of counsellors, to the formidable King Daśaratha (a scion of Ikṣwāku) of limitless glory and bring him along with his sons and counsellors." Going to the tent (of King Daśaratha), of course he saw Daśaratha (the promoter of the race of the Raghus) and, greeting him with his head bent low, submitted as follows:—"The celebrated King Janaka (belonging to the line of the Videhas), the ruler of Mithilā, O heroic king of Ayodhya, is eager to see you along with your preceptor and family priest."

मन्त्रिश्रेष्ठवचः श्रुत्वा राजा सर्षिगणस्तथा ॥१४॥
सबन्धुरगमत् तत्र जनको यत्र वर्तते । राजा च मन्त्रिसहितः सोपाध्यायः सबान्धवः ॥१५॥
वाक्यं वाक्यविदां श्रेष्ठो वैदेहमिदमब्रवीत् । विदितं ते महाराज इक्ष्वाकुकुलदैवतम् ॥१६॥
वक्ता सर्वेषु कृत्येषु वसिष्ठो भगवानृषिः । विश्वामित्राभ्यनुज्ञातः सह सर्वैर्महर्षिभिः ॥१७॥
एष वक्ष्यति धर्मात्मा वसिष्ठो मे यथाक्रमम् । तूष्णींभूते दशरथे वसिष्ठो भगवानृषिः ॥१८॥
उवाच वाक्यं वाक्यज्ञो वैदेहं सपुरोधसम् ।

Hearing the submission of Sudāmana (the chief of the counsellors of Janaka), the king (Daśaratha), accompanied by a multitude of sages as well as by his relations, called where Janaka was. Taking his seat along with his counsellors, preceptors and relations, Daśaratha, the foremost of those who know how to speak, spoke to Janaka (who belonged to the line of the Videhas) as follows:—"It may be known to you, O great king, that the very powerful sage Vasiṣṭha, the adored of the house of Ikṣwāku, is our spokesman in all matters. Seated by the side of all great seers, the aforesaid Vasiṣṭha, whose mind is given to piety, will with the approval of Viśwāmitra recount my pedigree in order of sequence." When Daśaratha became silent, the very powerful and omniscient Vasiṣṭha, who knows how to speak, spoke to Janaka (the ornament of the Videhas) and his family priest as follows:—

अव्यक्तप्रभवो ब्रह्मा शाश्वतो नित्य अव्ययः ॥१९॥
तस्मान्मरीचिः संजज्ञे मरीचेः कश्यपः सुतः । विवस्वान् कश्यपाज्जज्ञे मनुर्वैवस्वतः स्मृतः ॥२०॥
मनुः प्रजापतिः पूर्वमिक्ष्वाकुश्च मनोः सुतः । तमिक्ष्वाकुमयोध्यायां राजानं विद्धि पूर्वकम् ॥२१॥
इक्ष्वाकोस्तु सुतः श्रीमान् कुक्षिरित्येव विश्रुतः । कुक्षेरथात्मजः श्रीमान् विकुक्षिरुदपद्यत ॥२२॥
विकुक्षेस्तु महातेजा बाणः पुत्रः प्रतापवान् । बाणस्य तुं महातेजा अनरण्यः प्रतापवान् ॥२३॥
अनरण्यात् पृथुर्जज्ञे त्रिशङ्कुस्तु पृथोरपि । त्रिशङ्कोरभवत् पुत्रो धुन्धुमारो महायशाः ॥२४॥
धुन्धुमारान्महातेजा युवनाश्वो महारथः । युवनाश्वसुतश्चासीन्मांधाता पृथिवीपतिः ॥२५॥
मांधातुस्तु सुतः श्रीमान् सुसंधिरुदपद्यत । सुसंधेरपि पुत्रौ द्वौ ध्रुवसंधिः प्रसेनजित् ॥२६॥

"Born of the Unmanifest (Prakṛti) Brahmā (the creator of the universe) is immortal, eternal (in the sense that he lives to an age of two Parārdhas or 31,10,40,00,00,00,000 human years) and free from decay. (9—19) To him was born Sage Marīchi, Marīchi's son was Sage Kaśyapa. Vivaswān (the sun-god) was born to Kaśyapa. Vivaswān's son was known as Manu. (20) Manu was a Prajāpati (a lord of created beings) in the past and Ikṣwāku was the son of Manu. Know the aforesaid Ikṣwāku to have been the (very) first ruler of Ayodhya. (21) Nay, Ikṣwāku's glorious son was widely known by the name of Kukṣi and the illustrious Vikuṣi was born as a son to Kukṣi. (22) The highly glorious and mighty Bāṇa, again, was the son of Vikukṣi, and even so Anaraṇya was the highly glorious and mighty son of Bāṇa. (23) From (the loins of) Anaraṇya sprang up Pṛthu and from Pṛthu was born Triśanku. The highly illustrious Dhundhumāra was the son of Triśanku. (24) From Dhundhumāra sprang up the highly glorious Yuvanāśwa, a great car-warrior, and King Māndhātā was the son of Yuvanāśwa. (25) The glorious Susandhi, again, was born as a son to Māndhātā, while Dhruvasandhi and Prasenjit were the two sons of Susandhi. (26)

यशस्वी ध्रुवसंधेस्तु भरतो नाम नामतः । भरतात् तु महातेजा असितो नाम जायत ॥२७॥
यस्यैते प्रतिराजान उदपद्यन्त शत्रवः । हैहयास्तालजङ्घाश्च शूराश्च शशबिन्दवः ॥२८॥
तांश्च स प्रतियुध्यन् वै युद्धे राजा प्रवासितः । हिमवन्तमुपागम्य भार्याभ्यां सहितस्तदा ॥२९॥
असितोऽल्पबलो राजा कालधर्ममुपेयिवान् । द्वे चास्य भार्ये गर्भिण्यौ बभूवतुरिति श्रुतिः ॥३०॥
एका गर्भविनाशार्थं सपत्न्यै सगरं ददौ ।

"The illustrious son of Dhruvasandhi, again, as is well known, was Bharata by name; and from Bharata sprang up a highly glorious son, Asita by name, against whom the Haihayas, the Tālajanghas and the valiant Śaśabindus—these rival princes stood as enemies. (27-28) While confronting them in battle, of course, the said king was (routed and) banished from his kingdom (by the enemy, who usurped his throne). Retiring to the Himalayas along with his two consorts then, King Asita, who had a small force (left with him) met his death (a necessary adjunct of Time). His two wives of course happened to be *enceinte* (at that time): so it is heard. (29-30) One (of them) gave food mixed with poison to her co-wife in order to get rid of her foetus.

ततः शैलवरे रम्ये बभूवाभिरतो मुनिः ॥३१॥
भार्गवश्च्यवनो नाम हिमवन्तमुपाश्रितः । तत्र चैका महाभागा भार्गवं देववर्चसम् ॥३२॥
ववन्दे पद्मपत्राक्षी काङ्क्षन्ती सुतमुत्तमम् । तमृषिं साभ्युपागम्य कालिन्दी चाभ्यवादयत् ॥३३॥
स तामभ्यवदद् विप्रः पुत्रेप्सुं पुत्रजन्मनि । तव कुक्षौ महाभागे सुपुत्रः सुमहाबलः ॥३४॥
महावीर्यो महातेजा अचिरात् संजनिष्यति । गरेण सहितः श्रीमान् मा शुचः कमलेक्षणे ॥३५॥
च्यवनं च नमस्कृत्य राजपुत्री पतिव्रता । पत्या विरहिता तस्मात् पुत्रं देवी व्यजायत ॥३६॥
सपत्न्या तु गरस्तस्यै दत्तो गर्भजिघांसया । सह तेन गरेणैव संजातः सगरोऽभवत् ॥३७॥

"At that time an ascetic, Chyavana by name, a descendant of Sage Bhṛgu, who had taken up his abode on the Himalayas, got enamoured of that delightful and excellent peak (and made his appearance there). Desirous of bearing an excellent son, one of those (two) widows, the highly blessed Kālindī (who had been given poison with food by her co-wife and) who had eyes big as the petals of a lotus, saluted Chyavana (a scion of Bhṛgu), who possessed the splendour of god. (Nay) approaching the aforesaid seer, she greeted him (once more). (31—33) As regards the birth of a son (to her) the aforesaid Brahman said to her, eager as she was to have a (whole) son, "From your womb, O highly fortunate lady, will be born with poison not long afterwards a noble and charming son possessing unique strength exceedingly powerful and highly glorious. Do not grieve, O lotus-eyed lady!" (34-35) Having saluted Chyavana, the widowed princess, who was (solely) devoted to her husband, returned (to her cottage) and through the grace of the sage the glorious lady safely delivered a son. (36) Poison was administered to her by her co-wife, it will be remembered, with the intention of killing the foetus. The boy was named Sagara inasmuch as he was born along with that very poison (गरेण सह). (37)

सगरस्यासमञ्जस्तु असमञ्जादथांशुमान् । दिलीपोंऽशुमतः पुत्रो दिलीपस्य भगीरथः ॥३८॥
भगीरथात् ककुत्स्थश्च ककुत्स्थाच्च रघुस्तथा । रघोस्तु पुत्रस्तेजस्वी प्रवृद्धः पुरुषादकः ॥३९॥
कल्माषपादोऽप्यभवत् तस्माज्जातस्तु शङ्खणः । सुदर्शनः शङ्खणस्य अग्निवर्णः सुदर्शनात् ॥४०॥
शीघ्रगस्त्वग्निवर्णस्य शीघ्रगस्य मरुः सुतः । मरोः प्रशुश्रुकस्त्वासीदम्बरीषः प्रशुश्रुकात् ॥४१॥
अम्बरीषस्य पुत्रोऽभून्नहुषश्च महीपतिः । नहुषस्य ययातिस्तु नाभागस्तु ययातिजः ॥४२॥
नाभागस्य बभूवाज अजाद् दशरथोऽभवत् । अस्माद् दशरथाज्जातौ भ्रातरौ रामलक्ष्मणौ ॥४३॥
आदिवंशविशुद्धानां राज्ञां परमधर्मिणाम् । इक्ष्वाकुकुलजातानां वीराणां सत्यवादिनाम् ॥४४॥
रामलक्ष्मणयोरर्थे त्वत्सुते वरये नृप । सदृशाभ्यां नरश्रेष्ठ सदृशे दातुमर्हसि ॥४५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे सप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७० ॥

"Sagara's son was Asamañja and from Asamañja, again, sprang up Aṃśumān. Dilīpa was the son of Aṃśumān, Dilīpa's son was Bhagīratha. (38) From Bhagīratha sprang up Kakutstha and from Kakutstha likewise sprang up Raghu; while Raghu's son was the glorious Pravṛddha, who (later on) turned out to be an ogre (under the curse of his preceptor, Vasiṣṭha) and (also) became known as Kalmāṣapāda (because of his speckled feet).* Again, from the latter sprang up Śankhaṇa. Sudarśana was the son of Śankhaṇa; from Sudarśana sprang up Agnivarṇa. (39-40) Śīghraga was the son of Agnivarṇa and Śīghraga's son was Maru. Maru's son was Praśuśruka, while from Praśuśruka sprang up Ambarīṣa. (41) Ambarīṣa's son, again, was King Nahuṣa[*] and Nahuṣa's son was Yayāti; while Nābhāga was the son of Yayāti. (42) Nābhāga's son was Aja, from Aja sprang up Daśaratha. To this Daśaratha[†] (present before you) were born the two brothers, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (along with their two other brothers, Bharata and Śatrughna). (43) (On behalf of King Daśaratha, as his family priest) I sue for your two daughters, O protector of men, for the sake of Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, belonging as they do to the line of exceedingly pious, valiant and truthful monarchs born in the race of Ikṣwāku and absolutely pure of descent from the (very) beginning. Be pleased, O jewel among men, to give away your worthy daughters to the two (equally) worthy princes." (44-45)

---

* We read elsewhere how Pravṛddha, when turned into an ogre by the curse of Vasiṣṭha, took water in the palm of his hand in readiness to pronounce a counter-curse on his preceptor but, when deterred by his wife, threw the water on one of his feet, which got speckled that very moment.

Thus ends Canto Seventy in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXI

Recounting his own pedigree, Janaka offers the hand of his two daughters, Sītā and Ūrmilā, to Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa respectively.

एवं ब्रुवाणं जनकः प्रत्युवाच कृताञ्जलिः । श्रोतुमर्हसि भद्रं ते कुलं नः परिकीर्तितम् ॥ १ ॥
प्रदाने हि मुनिश्रेष्ठ कुलं निरवशेषतः । वक्तव्यं कुलजातेन तन्निबोध महामते ॥ २ ॥

To Vasiṣṭha, who was speaking as aforesaid, Janaka with joined palms replied (as follows) :—"Be pleased to hear our genealogy, which is going to be recounted by us. May God bless you." (1) On the eve of giving away one's daughter (to a bridegroom), O jewel among sages, one's pedigree needs must be exhaustively recited by one coming of a respectable family. Therefore hear my pedigree (as is being narrated by us), O Brahman of great wisdom ! (2)

राजाभूत् त्रिषु लोकेषु विश्रुतः स्वेन कर्मणा । निमिः परमधर्मात्मा सर्वसत्त्ववतां वरः ॥ ३ ॥
तस्य पुत्रो मिथिर्नाम जनको मिथिपुत्रकः । प्रथमो जनको राजा जनकादप्युदावसुः ॥ ४ ॥
उदावसोस्तु धर्मात्मा जातो वै नन्दिवर्धनः । नन्दिवर्धसुतः शूरः सुकेतुर्नाम नामतः ॥ ५ ॥
सुकेतोरपि धर्मात्मा देवरातो महाबलः । देवरातस्य राजर्षेर्बृहद्रथ इति स्मृतः ॥ ६ ॥
बृहद्रथस्य शूरोऽभून्महावीरः प्रतापवान् । महावीरस्य धृतिमान् सुधृतिः सत्यविक्रमः ॥ ७ ॥
सुधृतेरपि धर्मात्मा धृष्टकेतुः सुधार्मिकः । धृष्टकेतोश्च राजर्षेर्हर्यश्व इति विश्रुतः ॥ ८ ॥

---

[*] Kings Nahuṣa and Yayāti mentioned here are different from the kings of the same name belonging to the lunar dynasty and figuring in the Mahābhārata and elsewhere.

[†] The order in which the names occur here is different from that followed in some of the Purāṇas. The difference can, however, be reconciled by the fact that the accounts relate to different Kalpas or cycles.

हर्यश्वस्य मरुः पुत्रो मरोः पुत्रः प्रतीन्धकः । प्रतीन्धकस्य धर्मात्मा राजा कीर्तिरथः सुतः ॥ ९ ॥
पुत्रः कीर्तिरथस्यापि देवमीढ इति स्मृतः । देवमीढस्य विबुधो विबुधस्य महीध्रकः ॥१०॥
महीध्रकसुतो राजा कीर्तिरातो महाबलः । कीर्तिरातस्य राजर्षेर्महारोमा व्यजायत ॥११॥
महारोम्णस्तु धर्मात्मा स्वर्णरोमा व्यजायत । स्वर्णरोम्णस्तु राजर्षेर्ह्रस्वरोमा व्यजायत ॥१२॥

There was a most pious-minded king, Nimi (by name), who was the foremost of all powerful men and celebrated in (all) the three worlds for his deeds. (3) His son was Mithi by name; Mithi's son was Janaka, the first ruler bearing the title of Janaka. From Janaka, again, sprang up Udāvasu. (4) From Udāvasu indeed sprang up Nandivardhana, whose mind was really given to piety. Nandivardhana's gallant son, as is well known, was Suketu by name. (5) From Suketu, again, sprang up the pious-minded and very mighty Devarāta; the son of the royal sage Devarāta was known as Bṛhadratha. (6) The gallant and glorious Mahāvīra was the son of Bṛhadratha. Mahāvīra's steadfast and truly valiant son was Sudhṛti. (7) Sudhṛti's son, again, was the highly pious Dhṛṣṭaketu, whose mind was given to righteousness; and the son of the royal sage Dhṛṣṭaketu was widely known by the name of Haryaśwa. (8) Haryaśwa's son was Maru, Maru's son was Pratīndhaka and Pratīndhaka's pious-minded son was King Kīrtiratha. (9) Kīrtiratha's son, again, was known as Devamīḍha. Devamīḍha's son was Vibudha and Vibudha's Mahīdhraka. (10) Mahīdhraka's son was the very mighty King Kīrtirāta. Mahāromā was born as the son of the royal sage Kīrtirāta. (11) From Mahāromā indeed sprang up the pious-minded Swarṇaromā and from the royal sage Swarṇaromā sprang up Hraswaromā. (12)

तस्य पुत्रद्वयं राज्ञो धर्मज्ञस्य महात्मनः । ज्येष्ठोऽहमनुजो भ्राता मम वीरः कुशध्वजः ॥१३॥
मां तु ज्येष्ठं पिता राज्ये सोऽभिषिच्य नराधिपः । कुशध्वजं समावेश्य भारं मयि वनं गतः ॥१४॥
वृद्धे पितरि स्वर्याते धर्मेण धुरमावहम् । भ्रातरं देवसंकाशं स्नेहात् पश्यन् कुशध्वजम् ॥१५॥
कस्यचित् त्वथ कालस्य सांकाश्यादागतः पुरात् । सुधन्वा वीर्यवान् राजा मिथिलामवरोधकः ॥१६॥
स च मे प्रेषयामास शैवं धनुरनुत्तमम् । सीता च कन्या पद्माक्षी मह्य वै दीयतामिति ॥१७॥
तस्याप्रदानान्महर्षे युद्धमासीन्मया सह । स हतोऽभिमुखो राजा सुधन्वा तु मया रणे ॥१८॥
निहत्य तं मुनिश्रेष्ठ सुधन्वानं नराधिपम् । सांकाश्ये भ्रातरं शूरमभ्यषिञ्चं कुशध्वजम् ॥१९॥

A couple of sons were born to that high-souled king, who knew what is right, myself being the elder and my valiant brother, Kuśadhwaja, the younger. (13) Installing me, the elder one, on the throne and entrusting Kuśadhwaja to me as my charge, the king (my father) retired to the forest. (14) My aged father having ascended to heaven, I bore the burden (of kingship thrown by him on my shoulders) in conformity with (the principles of) righteousness, looking after with affection my brother Kuśadhwaja, who shines like a god. (15) Some time later the powerful King Sudhanvā came (all the way) from the town of Sānkāśya and besieged Mithilā. (16) He sent word to me saying, "The superb bow belonging to Lord Śiva as well as your lotus-eyed daughter, Sītā, may kindly be given away to me." (17) On my refusal, O great seer, he fought with me, with the result that, fighting face to face (with) me on the battle-field, the aforesaid King Sudhanvā was eventually killed by me. (18) Having got rid of the said King Sudhanvā, O jewel among sages, I enthroned my valiant brother, Kuśadhwaja, at Sānkāśya. (19)

कनीयानेष मे भ्राता अहं ज्येष्ठो महामुने । ददामि परमप्रीतो वध्वौ ते मुनिपुंगव ॥२०॥
सीतां रामाय भद्रं ते ऊर्मिलां लक्ष्मणाय वै । वीर्यशुल्कां मम सुतां सीतां सुरसुतोपमाम् ॥२१॥
द्वितीयामूर्मिलां चैव त्रिर्वदामि न संशयः । ददामि परमप्रीतो वध्वौ ते मुनिपुंगव ॥२२॥
रामलक्ष्मणयो राजन् गोदानं कारयस्व ह । पितृकार्यं च भद्रं ते ततो वैवाहिकं कुरु ॥२३॥
मघा ह्यद्य महाबाहो तृतीयदिवसे प्रभो ।
फल्गुन्यामुत्तरे राजंस्तस्मिन् वैवाहिकं कुरु । रामलक्ष्मणयोरर्थे दानं कार्यं सुखोदयम् ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे एकसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७१ ॥

This younger brother of mine as well as I, the elder, most delightfully offer to you my two daughters as your daughters-in-law, Sītā for Śrī Rāma and Ūrmilā for Lakṣmaṇa, O eminent sage! May prosperity attend on you, O jewel among sages! I repeat thrice: full of supreme delight I offer as your daughters-in-law my daughter, Sītā, who resembles a daughter of the gods and has been won (by Śrī Rāma) through (personal) valour, as also Ūrmilā, my second daughter. There is no doubt about it, O jewel among sages! (20—22) (Turning to Daśaratha) please get (the formality of) Samāvartana (the ceremony of returning to one's own parents' home after completing one's studies at the residence of one's teacher, marked with the shaving* of one's hair on the head as well as on the arm-pits) gone through by Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with delight, and then perform the Nāndīśrāddha (a ceremony intended to propitiate one's departed ancestors) preliminary to matrimony. May good betide you, O king! (23) Indeed the constellation Maghā is in the ascendant today, O mighty-armed king! On the third day, when the celebrated Uttarā Phālgunī mansion is in the ascendant, my lord, perform the wedding ceremony. Gifts, which are calculated to bring happiness in its wake, should be made for the welfare of Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. (24)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-one in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्विसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXII

Vasiṣṭha and Viśwāmitra jointly ask for the hand of the two daughters of Kuśadhwaja in favour of Bharata and Śatrughna and Janaka acquiesces in the proposal. Thereupon Daśaratha gets his sons to perform the rite of Samāvartana and himself performs the Nāndīśrāddha.

तमुक्तवन्तं वैदेहं विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । उवाच वचनं वीरं वसिष्ठसहितो नृपम् ॥ १ ॥
अचिन्त्यान्यप्रमेयाणि कुलानि नरपुंगव । इक्ष्वाकूणां विदेहानां नैषां तुल्योऽस्ति कश्चन ॥ २ ॥
सदृशो धर्मसम्बन्धः सदृशो रूपसम्पदा । रामलक्ष्मणयो राजन् सीता चोर्मिलया सह ॥ ३ ॥
वक्तव्यं च नरश्रेष्ठ श्रूयतां वचनं मम । भ्राता यवीयान् धर्मज्ञ एष राजा कुशध्वजः ॥ ४ ॥
अस्य धर्मात्मनो राजन् रूपेणाप्रतिमं भुवि । सुताद्वयं नरश्रेष्ठ पत्न्यर्थं वरयामहे ॥ ५ ॥

---

* The word 'गोदान' in Sanskrit also means the shaving of one's hair.

भरतस्य कुमारस्य शत्रुघ्नस्य च धीमतः । वरये ते सुते राजंस्तयोरर्थे महात्मनोः ॥ ६ ॥
पुत्रा दशरथस्येमे रूपयौवनशालिनः । लोकपालसमाः सर्वे देवतुल्यपराक्रमाः ॥ ७ ॥
उभयोरपि राजेन्द्र सम्बन्धेनानुबध्यताम् । इक्ष्वाकुकुलमव्यग्रं भवतः पुण्यकर्मणः ॥ ८ ॥

To the celebrated and heroic King Janaka (belonging to the Videha dynasty), who had finished his say, the great sage Viśwāmitra, accompanied by Vasiṣṭha, addressed the following words:—(1) "The (royal) houses of Ikṣwāku and Videha are inconceivably great and immeasurably glorious, O jewel among men ! There is none equal to those belonging to these two races. (2) The sacred (matrimonial) alliance (going to be contracted between the two houses) is well-matched; it is well-matched in point of physical charm as well as of riches; for Sītā along with Ūrmilā is (quite) becoming of Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. (3) There is more to be said (on this subject), O jewel among men ! Let my counsel be heard. Here is your younger brother, King Kuśadhwaja, who knows what is right. (4) We sue, O jewel among men, as a wife to Prince Bharata as also to the shrewd Śatrughna (the two other sons of Emperor Daśaratha) the two daughters, of this pious-minded prince, who are peerless on earth in point of comeliness. O king; (whereas) I ask your two daughters (Sītā and Ūrmilā) for these two high-souled princes (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), O Janaka ! (5-6) All these (four) sons of Daśaratha are full of charm as well as of youth, (nay) equal in prowess to gods, and the (very) compeers of the guardians of the spheres. (7) Through the marriage of both (these pairs) let the house of Ikṣwāku be bound (with ties of love), O ruler of rulers; and let your mind remain unperturbed (by a feeling of diffidence in contracting a fourfold relation with the great King Daśaratha all at once), a man of virtuous deeds as you are." (8)

विश्वामित्रवचः श्रुत्वा वसिष्ठस्य मते तदा । जनकः प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यमुवाच मुनिपुंगवौ ॥ ९ ॥
कुलं धन्यमिदं मन्ये येषां तौ मुनिपुंगवौ । सदृशं कुलसम्बन्धं यदाज्ञापयतः स्वयम् ॥१०॥
एवं भवतु भद्रं वः कुशध्वजसुते इमे । पत्न्यौ भजेतां सहितौ शत्रुघ्नभरतावुभौ ॥११॥
एकाह्ना राजपुत्रीणां चतसृणां महामुने । पाणीन् गृह्णन्तु चत्वारो राजपुत्रा महाबलाः ॥१२॥
उत्तरे दिवसे ब्रह्मन् फल्गुनीभ्यां मनीषिणः । वैवाहिकं प्रशंसन्ति भगो यत्र प्रजापतिः ॥१३॥

Hearing the proposal of Viśwāmitra, agreeing with the view of Vasiṣṭha, Janaka forthwith submitted to both the jewels among sages with joined palms as follows:—(9) "I consider my pedigree blessed in that you two shining jewels among sages personally enjoin us to contract a matrimonial alliance worthy of us. (10) Let it be so ! May good fortune attend on you (all) ! Let Śatrughna and Bharata both, who (ever) remain together, take to wife the said two daughters of Kuśadhwaja. (11) Let (all) the four very mighty princes marry the four princesses the same day, O eminent sage ! (12) The wise commend a wedding on the second of the following two days marked by the ascendency of the two lunar mansions bearing the name of Phalgunī (*viz*, the Pūrvā Phalgunī and the Uttarā Phalgunī), presided over by Prajāpati, the god presiding over the genitals." (13)

एवमुक्त्वा वचः सौम्यं प्रत्युत्थाय कृताञ्जलिः । उभौ मुनिवरौ राजा जनको वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥१४॥
परो धर्मः कृतो मह्यं शिष्योऽस्मि भवतोस्तथा । इमान्यासनमुख्यानि आस्यतां मुनिपुंगवौ ॥१५॥
यथा दशरथस्येयं तथायोध्या पुरी मम । प्रभुत्वे नास्ति संदेहो यथार्हं कर्तुमर्हथ ॥१६॥

Having made the aforesaid gentle request and rising from his seat (as a mark of respect), King Janaka submitted with joined palms to both the great sages as follows:—(14) "A supreme merit has been conferred upon me (by you in the form of virtue resulting from the contemplated gift of my daughters to worthy recipients). I am a servant to you both in the same way as Daśaratha is. Here are excellent seats (for you); let you (both) be seated, O jewels among sages ! (15) (Just) as this city (of Mithilā) belongs to Daśaratha, so is Ayodhya my own city. There can be no doubt about your authority (here). Be pleased (therefore) to do what is in the fitness of things." (16)

तथा ब्रुवति वैदेहे जनके रघुनन्दनः । राजा दशरथो हृष्टः प्रत्युवाच महीपतिम् ॥१७॥
युवामसंख्येयगुणौ भ्रातरौ मिथिलेश्वरौ । ऋषयो राजसंघाश्च भवद्भ्यामभिपूजिताः ॥१८॥
स्वस्ति प्राप्नुहि भद्रं ते गमिष्यामः स्वमालयम् । श्राद्धकर्माणि विधिवद्विधास्य इति चाब्रवीत् ॥१९॥
तमापृष्ट्वा नरपतिं राजा दशरथस्तदा । मुनीन्द्रौ तौ पुरस्कृत्य जगामाशु महायशाः ॥२०॥
स गत्वा निलयं राजा श्राद्धं कृत्वा विधानतः । प्रभाते काल्यमुत्थाय चक्रे गोदानमुत्तमम् ॥२१॥
गवां शतसहस्रं च ब्राह्मणेभ्यो नराधिपः । एकैकशो ददौ राजा पुत्रानुद्दिश्य धर्मतः ॥२२॥
सुवर्णशृङ्ग्यः सम्पन्नाः सवत्साः कांस्यदोहनाः । गवां शतसहस्राणि चत्वारि पुरुषर्षभः ॥२३॥
वित्तमन्यच्च सुबहु द्विजेभ्यो रघुनन्दनः । ददौ गोदानमुद्दिश्य पुत्राणां पुत्रवत्सलः ॥२४॥
स सुतैः कृतगोदानैर्वृतः सन् नृपतिस्तदा । लोकपालैरिवाभाति वृतः सौम्यः प्रजापतिः ॥२५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे द्विसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७२ ॥

While Janaka, who belonged to the line of the Videhas, was speaking thus, King Daśaratha, a scion of Raghu, joyously replied to the (aforesaid) king (as follows):—(17) "You two brothers, the rulers of Mithilā, possess innumerable qualities. Sages and hosts of princes have been entertained by you both (on many occasions)." (18) "Attain happiness. May God bless you ! We shall (now) retire to our own lodging and shall duly perform the Śrāddha rites," he added. (19) Asking leave of the celebrated Janaka (a ruler of men) at that moment, the highly illustrious King Daśaratha soon departed, placing the aforesaid two great sages (Vasiṣṭha and Viśwāmitra) at his head. (20) Reaching his lodging and performing the Śrāddha with due ceremony, the king rose in the morning and performed the grand Samāvartana ceremony (with respect to his four sons, consisting in the shaving of their hair and the gifting of cows), appropriate to that time. (21) The king (Daśaratha), who loved his sons very much, gave away in accordance with the principles of righteousness a hundred thousand cows to the Brahmans for the sake of each of his (four) sons. (22) In the name of the Samāvartana ceremony with respect to his (four) sons Emperor Daśaratha (a scion of Raghu), the foremost of men, who was (so) fond of his sons, bestowed (on that occasion) on the Brahmans four lakhs of (recently) calved cows that had their horns plated with gold and yielded ample milk, each with a milking vessel of bell-metal, as well as abundant riches of other description. (23-24) Surrounded on that occasion by his sons, who had their heads shaved and had gifted (so many) cows, the king shone brightly like the delightful Brahmā (the lord of created beings) surrounded by the guardians of the spheres. (25)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-two in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रिसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXIII

Janaka escorts Daśaratha and his four sons clad in nuptial attire to the pavilion erected for the wedding. Placing Viśwāmitra and Śatānanda at his head, Vasiṣṭha conducts the marriage ceremony. Śrī Rāma and his three brothers clasp the hand of Sītā and her sisters. Singing and dancing for joy, the gods rain heavenly flowers on the brides and bridegrooms.

यस्मिंस्तु दिवसे राजा चक्रे गोदानमुत्तमम् । तस्मिंस्तु दिवसे वीरो युधाजित् समुपेयिवान् ॥ १ ॥
पुत्रः केकयराजस्य साक्षाद् भरतमातुलः । दृष्ट्वा पृष्ट्वा च कुशलं राजानमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥
केकयाधिपती राजा स्नेहात् कुशलमब्रवीत् । येषां कुशलकामोऽसि तेषां सम्प्रत्यनामयम् ॥ ३ ॥
स्वस्रीयं मम राजेन्द्र द्रष्टुकामो महीपतिः । तदर्थमुपयातोऽहमयोध्यां रघुनन्दन ॥ ४ ॥
श्रुत्वा त्वहमयोध्यायां विवाहार्थं तवात्मजान् । मिथिलामुपयातांस्तु त्वया सह महीपते ॥ ५ ॥
त्वरयाभ्युपयातोऽहं द्रष्टुकामः स्वसुः सुतम् । अथ राजा दशरथः प्रियातिथिमुपस्थितम् ॥ ६ ॥
दृष्ट्वा परमसत्कारैः पूजनार्हमपूजयत् ।

On that very day when in fact the emperor (Daśaratha) performed the grand Samāvartana ceremony, the valiant Yudhājit, the son of the ruler of the Kekeya kingdom and Bharata's own maternal uncle, duly arrived (at Mithilā). Seeing the emperor and inquiring after his welfare, he submitted to him as follows :—(1-2) "(My father), the sovereign ruler of the Kekaya territory, has out of affection inquired after your welfare and added that all is well at present with those whose well-being you desire. (3) The king (my father) is eager to see Bharata (my sister's son), O king of kings ! For this purpose I went straight to Ayodhya, O scion of Raghu ! (4) When, however, O king, I heard at Ayodhya of your sons (Bharata and Śatrughna) having proceeded with you direct to Mithilā for the wedding (of Śrī Rāma), I drove in haste (to this place), eager to see my sister's son." Seeing his beloved guest (Yudhājit), deserving of (all) honour, arrived (in his presence), King Daśaratha forthwith entertained him with utmost attentions.

ततस्तामुषितो रात्रिं सह पुत्रैर्महात्मभिः ॥ ७ ॥
प्रभाते पुनरुत्थाय कृत्वा कर्माणि तत्त्ववित् । ऋषींस्तदा पुरस्कृत्य यज्ञवाटमुपागमत् ॥ ८ ॥
युक्ते मुहूर्ते विजये सर्वाभरणभूषितैः । भ्रातृभिः सहितो रामः कृतकौतुकमङ्गलः ॥ ९ ॥
वसिष्ठं पुरतः कृत्वा महर्षीनपरानपि । वसिष्ठो भगवानेत्य वैदेहमिदमब्रवीत् ॥१०॥
राजा दशरथो राजन् कृतकौतुकमङ्गलैः । पुत्रैर्नरवरश्रेष्ठो दातारमभिकाङ्क्षते ॥११॥
दातृप्रतिग्रहीतृभ्यां सर्वार्थाः सम्भवन्ति हि । स्वधर्मं प्रतिपद्यस्व कृत्वा वैवाह्यमुत्तमम् ॥१२॥

Then, having spent that night with his high-souled sons, he got up again in the morning; and, having finished his duties (for the morning), the king (who had realized the truth) forthwith reached the pavilion erected for the wedding, placing the sages at his head. (5—8) Placing at his head the sage Vasiṣṭha and other eminent sages too, and accompanied by (all) his (three) brothers, adorned with every ornament, Śrī Rāma, who was (himself) dressed in a festive attire appropriate to the occasion of wedding, also arrived at the hour known (in astronomical works) by the name of Vijaya (so called because it is calculated to bring success to an enterprise undertaken during that hour), propitious for a wedding. Arriving there, the holy Vasiṣṭha spoke to Janaka (born in the line of the Videhas) as follows:—(10) "Along with his sons, dressed in a festive attire appropriate to the occasion of wedding, O king, Emperor Daśaratha, a jewel among the foremost of men, awaits the pleasure of the donor; for all gifts take place (only) with the co-operation of the donor and the donee. (Therefore) performing the noble rites pertaining to the wedding, discharge your sacred obligation (of redeeming the given by you to king Daśaratha)." (11-12)

इत्युक्तः परमोदारो वसिष्ठेन महात्मना । प्रत्युवाच महातेजा वाक्यं परमधर्मवित् ॥१३॥
कः स्थितः प्रतिहारो मे कस्याज्ञां सम्प्रतीक्षते । स्वगृहे को विचारोऽस्ति यथा राज्यमिदं तव ॥१४॥
कृतकौतुकसर्वस्वा वेदिमूलमुपागताः । मम कन्या मुनिश्रेष्ठ दीप्ता वह्नेरिवार्चिषः ॥१५॥
सद्योऽहं त्वत्प्रतीक्षोऽस्मि वेद्यामस्यां प्रतिष्ठितः । अविघ्नं क्रियतां सर्वं किमर्थं हि विलम्ब्यते ॥१६॥
तद् वाक्यं जनकेनोक्तं श्रुत्वा दशरथस्तदा । प्रवेशयामास सुतान् सर्वानृषिगणानपि ॥१७॥
ततो राजा विदेहानां वसिष्ठमिदमब्रवीत् । कारयस्व ऋषे सर्वामृषिभिः सह धार्मिक ॥१८॥
रामस्य लोकरामस्य क्रियां वैवाहिकीं प्रभो ।

Requested thus by the high-souled Vasiṣṭha, the highly glorious Janaka, who was extremely noble and possessed the highest knowledge of what is right, replied as follows:—(13) "Who stands at the door to guard my entrance and whose permission does the emperor keenly await? What scruple should there be in entering one's own house? This kingdom is as much yours as mine. (14) Having gone through all auspicious rites connected with the wedding, my daughters, O jewel among sages, have (already) arrived at the foot of the sacrificial altar, looking like so many blazing flames of fire. (15) Firmly seated on this altar I am just waiting for you. (Hence) let everything (connected with the wedding) be performed without any let or hindrance. What for is the ceremony actually being delayed?" (16) Hearing the aforesaid reply given by Janaka, Daśaratha forthwith took his sons as also all the hosts of sages into the pavilion (erected for the wedding). (17) Thereupon Janaka (the ruler of the Videha kingdom) submitted as follows to Vasiṣṭha:—"Along with the (other) sages, O pious seer, conduct the nuptial ceremony of Śrī Rāma, the delight of the world, my lord!"

तथेत्युक्त्वा तु जनकं वसिष्ठो भगवानृषिः ॥१९॥
विश्वामित्रं पुरस्कृत्य शतानन्दं च धार्मिकम् । प्रपामध्ये तु विधिवद् वेदिं कृत्वा महातपाः ॥२०॥
अलंचकार तां वेदिं गन्धपुष्पैः समन्ततः । सुवर्णपालिकाभिश्च चित्रकुम्भैश्च साङ्कुरैः ॥२१॥
अङ्कुराढ्यैः शरावैश्च धूपपात्रैः सधूपकैः । शङ्खपात्रैः स्रुवैः स्रुग्भिः पात्रैरर्घ्याभिपूरितैः ॥२२॥
लाजपूर्णैश्च पात्रीभिरक्षतैरपि संस्कृतैः । दर्भैः समैः समास्तीर्य विधिवन्मन्त्रपूर्वकम् ॥२३॥
अग्निमाधाय तं वेद्यां विधिमन्त्रपुरस्कृतम् । जुहावाग्नौ महातेजा वसिष्ठो मुनिपुंगवः ॥२४॥

Saying "Amen!" to Janaka, and placing Viśwāmitra and the pious Śatānanda at his head, the holy sage Vasiṣṭha, who was a great ascetic, prepared a sacrificial altar at the centre of the pavilion according to the scriptural ordinance, and decorated the said altar on all sides with sandal-paste and flowers. He (then) provided it with plates of gold and jars of variegated colours containing sprouts as well as with shallow earthenware cups (also) full of sprouts, vessels for incense containing incense, conches serving the purpose of vessels, Sruks (large wooden ladles used for pouring ghee on a sacrificial fire and properly made of Palāśa or Khadira wood about as long as an arm, with a receptacle at the end of the size of a hand) and Sruvas (smaller wooden ladles used for pouring ghee into the Sruk), vessels brimful with water to be offered to a deity for washing the hands etc. with, as well as with vessels full of prached grains of paddy and smaller vessels as also with grains of unbroken rice dyed with the powder of dried turmeric root. (Again) bestrewing the altar with blades of Darbha grass equal in length and placing the fire on it according to the scriptural ordinance, while reciting sacred texts, the highly glorious Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of sages, poured oblations into it with due ceremony with the recitation of sacred texts. (18—24)

ततः सीतां समानीय सर्वाभरणभूषिताम् । समक्षमग्नेः संस्थाप्य राघवाभिमुखे तदा ॥२५॥
अब्रवीज्जनको राजा कौसल्यानन्दवर्धनम् । इयं सीता मम सुता सहधर्मचरी तव ॥२६॥
प्रतीच्छ चैनां भद्रं ते पाणिं गृह्णीष्व पाणिना । पतिव्रता महाभागा छायेवानुगता सदा ॥२७॥
इत्युक्त्वा प्राक्षिपद् राजा मन्त्रपूतं जलं तदा । साधु साध्विति देवानामृषीणां वदतां तदा ॥२८॥
देवदुन्दुभिनिर्घोषः पुष्पवर्षो महानभूत् ।

Duly escorting after that Sītā, adorned with all (sorts of) jewels, and having comfortably seated her before the sacred fire opposite Śrī Rāma (the ornament of Raghu's race), King Janaka then spoke (as follows) to Śrī Rāma (the promoter of Kauśalya's joy):—"This Sītā, my daughter, is going to be your helpmate in discharging your sacred obligations. (25-26) Take her hand in your own and accept her (as your own). May good betide you! She is highly fortunate and will remain exclusively devoted to you (her husband) and will ever follow you as a shadow." (27) Saying so, the king (Janaka) forthwith transferred (to Śrī Rāma's hand) the water (in his own hand), consecrated by the recitation of sacred texts (signifying his will to offer the hand of Sītā to Śrī Rāma). At that time was heard the noise of celestial kettledrums and there fell an abundant shower of flowers rained by gods and sages exclaiming "Good! Well done!"

एवं दत्त्वा सुतां सीतां मन्त्रोदकपुरस्कृताम् ॥२९॥
अब्रवीज्जनको राजा हर्षेणाभिपरिप्लुतः । लक्ष्मणागच्छ भद्रं दे ऊर्मिलामुद्यतां मया ॥३०॥
प्रतीच्छ पाणिं गृह्णीष्व मा भूत् कालस्य पर्ययः । तमेवमुक्त्वा जनको भरतं चाभ्यभाषत ॥३१॥
गृहाण पाणिं माण्डव्याः पाणिना रघुनन्दन । शत्रुघ्नं चापि धर्मात्मा अब्रवीन्मिथिलेश्वरः ॥३२॥
श्रुतकीर्तेर्महाबाहो पाणिं गृह्णीष्व पाणिना । सर्वे भवन्तः सौम्याश्च सर्वे सुचरितव्रताः ॥३३॥
पत्नीभिः सन्तु काकुत्स्था मा भूत् कालस्य पर्ययः ।

Having thus given away (to Śrī Rāma) his daughter, Sītā, in the wake of water (held in his palm and) consecrated by the recitation of Mantras (giving expression to his vow of bestowing the princess on Śrī Rāma), King Janaka, filled with rapture, said (to Lakṣmaṇa), "Lakṣmaṇa, come along; may good betide you! Accept Ūrmilā (being) given away by me. Take her hand (in your own), let there be no loss of time." Having requested him (Lakṣmaṇa) thus, Janaka spoke to Bharata too (as follows):—(28—31) "Clasp the hand of Māṇḍavī with your own, O scion of Raghu!" The pious king of Mithilā further said to Śatrughna, "Take in your hand, O mighty-armed prince, the hand of Śrutakīrti. You are all gentle and have all duly observed sacred vows (of celibacy etc). (32-33) Let yourselves be married, O scions of Kakutstha! Let there be no delay."

जनकस्य वचः श्रुत्वा पाणीन् पाणिभिरस्पृशन् ॥३४॥
चत्वारस्ते चतसृणां वसिष्ठस्य मते स्थिताः । अग्निं प्रदक्षिणं कृत्वा वेदिं राजानमेव च ॥३५॥
ऋषींश्चापि महात्मानः सहभार्या रघूद्वहाः । यथोक्तेन ततश्चक्रुर्विवाहं विधिपूर्वकम् ॥३६॥
पुष्पवृष्टिर्महत्यासीदन्तरिक्षात् सुभास्वरा । दिव्यदुन्दुभिनिर्घोषैर्गीतवादित्रनिःस्वनैः ॥३७॥
ननृतुश्चाप्सरस्संघा गन्धर्वाश्च जगुः कलम् । विवाहे रघुमुख्यानां तदद्भुतमदृश्यत ॥३८॥
ईदृशे वर्तमाने तु तूर्योद्घुष्टनिनादिते । त्रिरग्निं ते परिक्रम्य ऊहुर्भार्या महौजसः ॥३९॥
अथोपकार्यं जग्मुस्ते सभार्या रघुनन्दनाः । राजाप्यनुययौ पश्यन् सर्षिसंघः सबान्धवः ॥४०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे त्रिसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७३ ॥

Hearing the request of Janaka, (all) the four princes, who followed the judgment of Vasiṣṭha, grasped with their hands the hands of the four princesses. Going clockwise round the sacrificial fire, the altar as well as round Janaka and the sages too, the high-souled princes (the jewels among the Raghus) along with their brides thereupon went through the wedding ceremony in accordance with the (correct) procedure as laid down in our scriptures. (34—36) Accompanied by the loud beating of celestial kettle-drums and the melodious sound of vocal and instrumental music, an abundant and most splendid shower of blossoms fell from the heavens. (37) Nay, bevies of celestial nymphs danced and Gandharvas sang in a sweet voice. That was a marvellous phenomenon which was noticed during the wedding of the jewels of Raghu's race. (38) While such a (celestial) consonance of sounds prevailed with its echo, those highly glorious princes went round the (sacrificial) fire thrice and married their brides. (39) Accompanied by their consorts, those scions of Raghu then retired to their tents. The emperor too with the hosts of Ṛṣis and his relations followed suit, beholding (with joy) the brides and the bridegrooms. (40)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-three in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुस्सप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXIV

Taking leave of Janaka and Daśaratha, Viśwāmitra returns to his own hermitage and, accepting large wedding presents, Daśaratha too turns back to Ayodhya along with his sons and their newly-wedded brides. On the way the irascible and redoubtable Paraśurāma, a sworn enemy of the Kṣatriyas, suddenly appears before them, axe in hand, and Vasiṣṭha and the other sages accompanying the party offer worship to him.

आपृष्ट्वा तौ च राजानौ जगामोत्तरपर्वतम् ॥ १ ॥
अथ रात्र्यां व्यतीतायां विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः । आपृष्ट्वैव जगामाशु राजा दशरथः पुरीम् ॥ २ ॥
विश्वामित्रे गते राजा वैदेहं मिथिलाधिपम् । गवां शतसहस्राणि बहूनि मिथिलेश्वरः ॥ ३ ॥
अथ राजा विदेहानां ददौ कन्याधनं बहु । हस्त्यश्वरथपादातं दिव्यरूपं स्वलंकृतम् ॥ ४ ॥
कम्बलानां च मुख्यानां क्षौमान् कोट्यम्बराणि च । हिरण्यस्य सुवर्णस्य मुक्तानां विद्रुमस्य च ॥ ५ ॥
ददौ कन्याशतं तासां दासीदासमनुत्तमम् । दत्त्वा बहुविधं राजा समनुज्ञाप्य पार्थिवम् ॥ ६ ॥
ददौ राजा सुसंहृष्टः कन्याधनमनुत्तमम् ।

प्रविवेश स्वनिलयं मिथिलां मिथिलेश्वरः । राजाप्ययोध्याधिपतिः सह पुत्रैर्महात्मभिः ॥ ७ ॥
ऋषीन् सर्वान् पुरस्कृत्य जगाम सबलानुगः ।

Asking leave of both the kings, the night having passed, the eminent sage Viśwāmitra forthwith proceeded direct to the northern mountain (the Himalayas). (1) Asking permission of Janaka (who belonged to the line of the Videhas), the ruler of Mithilā, the moment Viśwāmitra had departed, the glorious King Daśaratha (too) proceeded immediately to his capital. (2) At that time the ruler of the Videha territory gave a rich dowry. (As a part of that dowry) the king of Mithilā gave away many lakhs of cows and (as many) first-class carpets, (numerous) silken textiles and tens of millions of cotton pieces, elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers, a hundred richly-adorned maids endowed with supernal beauty (as companions) for his daughters, excellent servants and servant-maids and a lot of silver, gold, pearls and coral beads. (3—5) Extremely delighted, the king (thus) gave an excellent dowry. Having given manifold presents and duly taking leave of Daśaratha (the ruler of the earth), the king of Mithilā returned to Mithilā, his own capital. Placing at his head all the sages (that had accompanied him to Mithilā) and accompanied by his army and *entourage*, King Daśaratha (the ruler of Ayodhya) too departed with his high-souled sons (for Ayodhya).

गच्छन्तं तं नरव्याघ्रं सर्षिसंघं सराघवम् ॥ ८ ॥
घोरास्तु पक्षिणो वाचो व्याहरन्ति समन्ततः । भौमाश्चैव मृगाः सर्वे गच्छन्ति स्म प्रदक्षिणम् ॥ ९ ॥
तान् दृष्ट्वा राजशार्दूलो वसिष्ठं पर्यपृच्छत । असौम्याः पक्षिणो घोरा मृगाश्चापि प्रदक्षिणाः ॥१०॥
किमिदं हृदयोत्कम्पि मनो मम विषीदति । राज्ञो दशरथस्यैतच्छ्रुत्वा वाक्यं महानृषिः ॥११॥
उवाच मधुरां वाणीं श्रूयतामस्य यत् फलम् । उपस्थितं भयं घोरं दिव्यं पक्षिमुखाच्च्युतम् ॥१२॥
मृगाः प्रशमयन्त्येते सतापस्त्यज्यतामयम् । तेषां संवदतां तत्र वायुः प्रादुर्बभूव ह ॥१३॥
कम्पयन् मेदिनीं सर्वां पातयंश्च महाद्रुमान् । तमसा संवृतः सूर्यः सर्वे नावेदिषुर्दिशः ॥१४॥
भस्मना चावृतं सर्वं सम्मूढमिव तद्बलम् । वसिष्ठ ऋषयश्चान्ये राजा च ससुतस्तदा ॥१५॥
ससंज्ञा इव तत्रासन् सर्वमन्यद्विचेतनम् ।

While that tiger among men was journeying with the hosts of sages as well as with his four sons (the scions of Raghu), fearful birds began to cry all around him; while, on the other hand, the deer on the land, one and all, crossed his path from the left. (6—9) Seeing them, Daśaratha (a tiger among kings) respectfully inquired of Vasiṣṭha, saying, "Loathsome birds are screaming (on the one hand, which is an ominous portent); and at the same time deer cross my way from the left (which is a good omen) ! (10) What may this be, which makes my heart quiver ? My mind is sorrowful." Hearing this question of King Daśaratha, the great seer (Vasiṣṭha) replied in a sweet tone (as follows) :— "Hear what it portends. The indication that comes from the screaming of birds in the air is that a grave danger is imminent. (11-12) These deer (however) allay our fears. (Therefore) let this anxiety be given up." While they were conversing (thus) on the road, a tempest set in, they say, shaking the entire globe and throwing down big trees. The sun got enveloped in darkness, all people failed to discern the directions. (13-14) Nay, covered all over with dust, the whole of Daśaratha's army stood dumbfounded as it were. At that time (only) Vasiṣṭha and the other sages as well as the king including his (four) sons retained their consciousness, all the rest on that spot became unconscious as it were.

तस्मिंस्तमसि घोरे तु भस्मच्छन्नेव सा चमूः ॥१६॥
ददर्श भीमसंकाशं जटामण्डलधारिणम् । भार्गवं जामदग्न्येयं राजा राजविमर्दनम् ॥१७॥
कैलासमिव दुर्धर्षं कालाग्निमिव दुस्सहम् । ज्वलन्तमिव तेजोभिर्दुर्निरीक्ष्यं पृथग्जनैः ॥१८॥
स्कन्धे चासज्य परशुं धनुर्विद्युद्गणोपमम् । प्रगृह्य शरमुग्रं च त्रिपुरघ्नं यथा शिवम् ॥१९॥
तं दृष्ट्वा भीमसंकाशं ज्वलन्तमिव पावकम् । वसिष्ठप्रमुखा विप्रा जपहोमपरायणाः ॥२०॥
संगता मुनयः सर्वे संजजल्पुरथो मिथः । कच्चित् पितृवधामर्षी क्षत्रं नोत्सादयिष्यति ॥२१॥
पूर्वं क्षत्रवधं कृत्वा गतमन्युर्गतज्वरः । क्षत्रस्योत्सादनं भूयो न खल्वस्य चिकीर्षितम् ॥२२॥
एवमुक्त्वार्घ्यमादाय भार्गवं भीमदर्शनम् । ऋषयो राम रामेति मधुरं वाक्यमब्रुवन् ॥२३॥
प्रतिगृह्य तु तां पूजामृषिदत्तां प्रतापवान् । रामं दाशरथिं रामो जामदग्न्योऽभ्यभाषत ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे चतुस्सप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७४ ॥

In that dreadful darkness the aforesaid army (of Daśaratha), which was actually covered with dust, as well as the king beheld the terrible-looking sage Paraśurāma (son of Jamadagni), the destroyer of the Kṣatriyas, born in the race of Bhṛgu, wearing matted locks formed into a coil at the crown, unassailable as Mount Kailāsa, irresistible as the destructive fire raging at the time of universal dissolution, blazing as it were with effulgence and (as such difficult to gaze upon for common men), with an axe on his (right) shoulder and a bow (on his left) and holding (in his hand) a fierce shaft, resembling streaks of lightning, like (another) Lord Śiva, the Destroyer of the demon Tripura. (15—19) Seeing the sage, terrible of aspect and blazing like fire, all the Brahman seers and sages, given to the practice of austerities and Homa (offering oblations to the sacred fire), with Vasiṣṭha at their head, collected (at one place) and talked to one another, "Let us hope, full of indignation over the assassination of his father, he is not going to exterminate the Kṣatriya race (over again). (20-21) Surely it is not his intention to wipe out the Kṣatriyas once more, since having massacred the Kṣatriyas in the past, he has his anger appeased and has been rid of his agony (caused by his father's death)." (22) Talking in this strain and taking (in their hands) water to wash his hands with, the sages accosted the scion of Bhṛgu, who wore a terrible aspect, in sweet words, "Rāma, O Rāma!" (23) While accepting that honour done by the sages (Vasiṣṭha and others), the glorious Paraśurāma, son of Jamadagni, spoke (as follows) to Śrī Rāma, the (eldest) son of Daśaratha. (24)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-four in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXV

Turning a deaf ear to Daśaratha's prayer, Paraśurāma relates the history of the bows belonging to Lords Śiva and Viṣṇu and challenges Śrī Rāma to string the bow of Lord Viṣṇu in his possession.

राम दाशरथे वीर वीर्यं ते श्रूयतेऽद्भुतम् । धनुषो भेदनं चैव निखिलेन मया श्रुतम् ॥ १ ॥
तदद्भुतमचिन्त्यं च भेदनं धनुषस्तथा । तच्छ्रुत्वाहमनुप्राप्तो धनुर्गृह्यापरं शुभम् ॥ २ ॥

तदिदं घोरसंकाशं जामदग्न्यं महद् धनुः । पूरयस्व शरेणैव स्वबलं दर्शयस्व च ॥ ३ ॥
तदहं ते बलं दृष्ट्वा धनुषोऽप्यस्य पूरणे । द्वन्द्वयुद्धं प्रदास्यामि वीर्यश्लाघ्यमहं तव ॥ ४ ॥

O Rāma, O valiant son of Daśaratha, your prowess is reported to be marvellous and your feat in the shape of breaking the bow (of Lord Śiva) has also been heard of by me in all its details. (1) Breaking the bow in the way you have done is (indeed) marvellous and cannot (even) be conceived (by others). Hearing of it, I have arrived (here), taking another sacred bow. (2) Therefore, fitting this great and terrible-looking bow, received (by me) from Jamadagni (my father), with an arrow, simply draw it to its full length and demonstrate your might (thereby). (3) Having witnessed that strength of yours in drawing this bow too at full length, I shall offer you a single combat which will bring credit to your valour." (4)

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा राजा दशरथस्तदा । विषण्णवदनो दीनः प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥ ५ ॥
क्षत्ररोषात् प्रशान्तस्त्वं ब्राह्मणश्च महातपाः । बालानां मम पुत्राणामभयं दातुमर्हसि ॥ ६ ॥
भार्गवाणां कुले जातः स्वाध्यायव्रतशालिनाम् । सहस्राक्षे प्रतिज्ञाय शस्त्रं प्रक्षिप्तवानसि ॥ ७ ॥
स त्वं धर्मपरो भूत्वा कश्यपाय वसुंधराम् । दत्त्वा वनमुपागम्य महेन्द्रकृतकेतनः ॥ ८ ॥
मम सर्वविनाशाय सम्प्राप्तस्त्वं महामुने । न चैकस्मिन् हते रामे सर्वे जीवामहे वयम् ॥ ९ ॥
ब्रुवत्येवं दशरथे जामदग्न्यः प्रतापवान् । अनादृत्य तु तद्वाक्यं राममेवाभ्यभाषत ॥१०॥

Hearing that challenge of Paraśurāma, King Daśaratha felt miserable and, pulling a long face, forthwith spoke with joined palms as follows:—(5) "Having given up your anger towards the Kṣatriyas, you have (since) grown very calm and, being a Brahman and a great ascetic (too), you ought to give assurance of safety to my juvenile sons. (6) Born in the line of the Bhārgavas (the scions of Bhṛgu), distinguished for their study of the Vedas and sacred vows, you have relinquished the arms, giving your word of honour (in this behalf) to Indra. (7) As such you set your mind on piety and gave away (the dominion of) the earth to Sage Kaśyapa and, retiring to the woods, took up your abode on Mount Mahendra. (8) For my total annihilation (however) you have appeared (here), O great sage! And we shall all cease to live (even) if Rāma alone is killed (by you)." (9) Turning a deaf ear to his entreaty, however, even though Daśaratha prayed as aforesaid, the glorious Paraśurāma (son of Jamadagni) continued to address Śrī Rāma alone (and said):—(10)

इमे द्वे धनुषी श्रेष्ठे दिव्ये लोकाभिपूजिते । दृढे बलवती मुख्ये सुकृते विश्वकर्मणा ॥११॥
अनुसृष्टं सुरैरेकं त्र्यम्बकाय युयुत्सवे । त्रिपुरघ्नं नरश्रेष्ठ भग्नं काकुत्स्थ यत्त्वया ॥१२॥
इदं द्वितीयं दुर्धर्षं विष्णोर्दत्तं सुरोत्तमैः । तदिदं वैष्णवं राम धनुः परपुरंजयम् ॥१३॥
समानसारं काकुत्स्थ रौद्रेण धनुषा त्विदम् ।

"These two excellent heavenly bows (one of which was broken by you the other day, the other being with me), strong, powerful and foremost as they are, were adored by the (whole) world and were cleverly manufactured by Viśwakarmā. (11) One (of them), which has been broken by you, O scion of Kakutstha, was handed over by the gods to Lord Śiva (the three-eyed divinity), eager to fight (with the demon Tripura), and (ultimately) succeeded in killing him, O jewel among men! (12) This second one, hard to prevail against, was given by the foremost of the gods to Lord Viṣṇu. This (which you behold in my hand) is the same bow of Lord Viṣṇu, which is able to reduce the enemy's stronghold, O Rāma! (13) It is fact equal in strength to the bow of Rudra (which has already yielded to your strength), O scion of Kakutstha, (as will appear from the following anecdote:—)

तदा तुं देवताः सर्वाः पृच्छन्ति स्म पितामहम् ॥१४॥
शितिकण्ठस्य विष्णोश्च बलाबलनिरीक्षया । अभिप्रायं तु विज्ञाय देवतानां पितामहः ॥१५॥
विरोधं जनयामास तयोः सत्यवतां वरः । विरोधे तु महद् युद्धमभवद् रोमहर्षणम् ॥१६॥
शितिकण्ठस्य विष्णोश्च परस्परजयैषिणोः । तदा तु जृम्भितं शैवं धनुर्भीमपराक्रमम् ॥१७॥
हुंकारेण महादेवः स्तम्भितोऽथ त्रिलोचनः । देवैस्तदा समागम्य सर्षिसंघः सचारणैः ॥१८॥
याचितौ प्रशमं तत्र जग्मतुस्तौ सुरोत्तमौ ।

"At that very time (when the demon Tripura was killed by Lord Śiva) all the gods (approached and) put a question to Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation) with a view to ascertaining the (relative) strength and weakness of Lords Śiva (whose neck is marked with a blue patch) and Viṣṇu. Reading the mind of the gods, Brahmā, the foremost of the votaries of truth, for his part sowed the seed of discord between the two divinities. As a sequel to that tension a terrible and thrilling combat actually ensued between Lords Śiva and Viṣṇu, who were eager to conquer each other. In the course of that combat of course the bow of Lord Śiva, possessed as it was of terrible strength, was rendered inoperative and the three-eyed Lord Mahādeva (too) struck motionless by the (very) roar (of Lord Viṣṇu). The two foremost divinities came to terms on that occasion (only) when they were approached and entreated on that (very) spot by the gods, accompanied by hosts of Ṛṣis as well as by Chāraṇas (celestial bards), to compose their differences.

जृम्भितं तद् धनुर्दृष्ट्वा शैवं विष्णुपराक्रमैः ॥१९॥
अधिकं मेनिरे विष्णुं देवाः सर्षिगणास्तथा । धनू रुद्रस्तु संक्रुद्धो विदेहेषु महायशाः ॥२०॥
देवरातस्य राजर्षेर्ददौ हस्ते ससायकम् । इदं च वैष्णवं राम धनुः परपुरंजयम् ॥२१॥
ऋचीके भार्गवे प्रादाद् विष्णुः स न्यासमुत्तमम् । ऋचीकस्तु महातेजाः पुत्रस्याप्रतिकर्मणः ॥२२॥
पितुर्मम ददौ दिव्यं जमदग्नेर्महात्मनः । न्यस्तशस्त्रे पितरि मे तपोबलसमन्विते ॥२३॥
अर्जुनो विदधे मृत्युं प्राकृतां बुद्धिमास्थितः ।
वधमप्रतिरूपं तु पितुः श्रुत्वा सुदारुणम् । क्षत्रमुत्सादयं रोषाज्जातं जातमनेकशः ॥२४॥
पृथिवीं चाखिलां प्राप्य कश्यपाय महात्मने । यज्ञस्यान्तेऽददं राम दक्षिणां पुण्यकर्मणे ॥२५॥

"Seeing the celebrated bow of Lord Śiva rendered inoperative as aforesaid by the prowess of Lord Viṣṇu, the gods along with the hosts of Ṛṣis (assembled there) accounted Lord Viṣṇu superior (to Lord Śiva). Feeling enraged, the most illustrious Lord Rudra (the god of destruction) thereupon delivered the bow together with the arrows into the hands of the royal sage Devarāta born in the line of the Videha kings. Lord Viṣṇu, on the other hand, O Rāma, made over this superb bow of His own, capable of subduing the enemy's strong hold, as a trust to Ṛchīka, a scion of sage Bhṛgu. The highly glorious Ṛchīka in his turn bestowed the heavenly gift on his (own) son, the high-souled Jamadagni, my father, who was too good to retaliate a wrong (and had therefore no use for it). Reckoning my father, who had given up the use of arms and was richly endowed with spiritual energy earned through his austerities, as a common man, Arjuna (more popularly known by the name of Sahasrabāhu because of his thousand arms) caused his death. Hearing of my father's most cruel and unmerited death, I for my part uprooted more than once (as many as twenty-one times) out of indignation the Kṣatriyas even as they were born. (14—24) Having acquired (dominion over) the entire globe (in this way), I gifted it, O Rāma, to the high-souled sage Kaśyapa of meritorious deeds by way of sacrificial fee at the end of a sacrifice (which I performed in atonement for the great bath of blood). (25)

दत्त्वा महेन्द्रनिलयस्तपोबलसमन्वितः । श्रुत्वा तु धनुषो भेदं ततोऽहं द्रुतमागतः ॥२६॥
तदेवं वैष्णवं राम पितृपैतामहं महत् । क्षत्रधर्मं पुरस्कृत्य गृह्णीष्व धनुरुत्तमम् ॥२७॥
योजयस्व धनुःश्रेष्ठे शरं परपुरंजयम् । यदि शक्तोऽसि काकुत्स्थ द्वन्द्वं दास्यामि ते ततः ॥२८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे पञ्चसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७५ ॥

"(Nay,) having made the gift, I took up my abode on Mount Mahendra. Richly endowed with (spiritual) energy earned through austerities (in the meantime), however, I expeditiously arrived here from that (distant) place on hearing of the breaking of the bow. (26) Placing above all (else) the noble duty of a Kṣatriya (which consists in accepting the challenge of a warrior to a duel in a righteous cause), O Rāma, take (in your hand) the celebrated and superb bow belonging to Lord Viṣṇu, inherited by me through my father from my grandfather). (27) And fit the arrow, capable of reducing the stronghold of an enemy, to this foremost of bows provided you are equal to it, O scion of Kakutstha ! Then (alone) I shall offer a single combat to you." (28)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-five in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षट्सप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXVI

Fitting the arrow to the bow of Lord Viṣṇu and declaring it as unfailing, Śrī Rāma asks Paraśurāma to point out at whom it may be discharged, and at the instance of the latter puts an end to his title to the (ethereal) worlds earned by him through his austerities. Recognizing Śrī Rāma to be no other than Lord Viṣṇu and taking leave of him, Paraśurāma withdraws to Mount Mahendra in order to resume his austerities.

श्रुत्वा तु जामदग्न्यस्य वाक्यं दाशरथिस्तदा । गौरवाद् यन्त्रितकथः पितू राममथाब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
कृतवानसि यत् कर्म श्रुतवानस्मि भार्गव । अनुरुध्यामहे ब्रह्मन् पितुरानृण्यमास्थितः ॥ २ ॥
वीर्यहीनमिवाशक्तं क्षत्रधर्मेण भार्गव । अवजानासि मे तेजः पश्य मेऽद्य पराक्रमम् ॥ ३ ॥

Hearing the challenge of Jamadagni's son, Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha), of course, who remained tongue-tied on that occasion out of regard for his father, now spoke to Paraśurāma (as follows) :— (1) "I have heard, O scion of Bhṛgu, of the work that you have done, intent on repaying the debt you owed to your father (by avenging his death). We approve of it, O holy Brahman ! (2) Since (however) you despise me,—devoted as I am to the duty of a Kṣatriya (and therefore chary of speech in the presence of a holy Brahman like you),—as powerless, as though lacking in virility, O scion of Bhṛgu, (pray) witness my glory and prowess today." (3)

इत्युक्त्वा राघवः क्रुद्धो भार्गवस्य वरायुधम् । शरं च प्रतिजग्राह हस्ताल्लघुपराक्रमः ॥ ४ ॥
आरोप्य स धनू रामः शरं सज्यं चकार ह । जामदग्न्यं ततो रामं रामः क्रुद्धोऽब्रवीदिदम् ॥ ५ ॥
ब्राह्मणोऽसीति पूज्यो मे विश्वामित्रकृतेन च । तस्माच्छक्तो न ते राम मोक्तुं प्राणहरं शरम् ॥ ६ ॥

इमां वा त्वद्गतिं राम तपोबलसमर्जितान् । लोकानप्रतिमान्वापि हनिष्यामीति मे मतिः ॥ ७ ॥
नह्ययं वैष्णवो दिव्यः शरः परपुरंजयः । मोघः पतति वीर्येण बलदर्पविनाशनः ॥ ८ ॥

Saying so and growing indignant, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) of swift prowess seized the excellent weapon (bow) as well as the arrow from the hand (and further withdrew the divine energy*) of Paraśurāma (a scion of the sage Bhṛgu). (4) Stringing the bow, the celebrated Śrī Rāma set the arrow to the string: so the tradition goes. Getting angry, Śrī Rāma then spoke to Paraśurāma (son of Jamadagni) as follows:—(5) "You are worthy of respect to me in that you are a Brahman and (also) because of your kinship with Viśwāmitra (who is the maternal uncle of your father). Therefore I dare not hurl the deadly arrow at you, O Rāma ! (6) I shall as an alternative take away, O Rāma, your present (capacity of unobstructed) movement (in all the three worlds) or put an end to your title to the peerless (ethereal) worlds, duly acquired by dint of asceticism: such is my mind. (7) This transcendent arrow of Lord Viṣṇu, capable (as it is) of reducing the stronghold of an enemy and crushing the might as well as the pride of an adversary by its (unique) power, never goes without hitting its mark." (8)

वरायुधधरं रामं द्रष्टुं सर्षिगणाः सुराः । पितामहं पुरस्कृत्य समेतास्तत्र सर्वशः ॥ ९ ॥
गन्धर्वाप्सरसश्चैव सिद्धचारणकिंनराः । यक्षराक्षसनागाश्च तद् द्रष्टुं महदद्भुतम् ॥१०॥
जडीकृते तदा लोके रामे वरधनुर्धरे । निर्वीर्यो जामदग्न्योऽसौ रामो राममुदैक्षत ॥११॥
तेजोभिर्गतवीर्यत्वाज्जामदग्न्यो जडीकृतः । रामं कमलपत्राक्षं मन्दं मन्दमुवाच ह ॥१२॥

Placing Brahmā (the progenitor of the entire creation) at their head, all the gods, accompanied by hosts of Ṛṣis, assembled there (in their aerial cars) in order to behold Śrī Rāma wielding the superb weapon (of Lord Viṣṇu). (9) Gandharvas and celestial dancing girls as well as Siddhas, Chāraṇas and Kinnaras as also Yakṣas, ogres and Nāgas (too) collected (there) in order to witness that great marvel. (10) People (gathered there) having been stunned at that time (with fear at the thought of the dire consequences that might follow from the show of valour on the part of Śrī Rāma) when Śrī Rāma took up the superb bow (of Lord Viṣṇu), the celebrated Paraśurāma, son of Jamadagni, (now) rendered powerless, looked with wonder at Śrī Rāma. (11) Dazed by the brilliance (of Śrī Rāma) due to his having been rendered powerless, the son of Jamadagni spoke in a low tone as follows to Śrī Rāma, whose eyes resembled the petals of a lotus:—(12)

काश्यपाय मया दत्ता यदा पूर्वं वसुंधरा । विषये मे न वस्तव्यमिति मां काश्यपोऽब्रवीत् ॥१३॥
सोऽहं गुरुवचः कुर्वन् पृथिव्यां न वसे निशाम् । तदाप्रभृति काकुत्स्थ कृता मे काश्यपस्य ह ॥१४॥
तामिमां मद्गतिं वीर हन्तुं नार्हसि राघव । मनोजवं गमिष्यामि महेन्द्रं पर्वतोत्तमम् ॥१५॥
लोकास्त्वप्रतिमा राम निर्जितास्तपसा मया । जहि ताञ्छरमुख्येन मा भूत् कालस्य पर्ययः ॥१६॥

---

* We read in the Padma-Purāṇa—

इत्युक्त्वा देवि वैष्णव्या शक्त्या तद्गतया सह । जग्राह वैष्णवं चापं विनयेन च लीलया ॥

"Saying so, Śrī Rāma seized in sport, yet with modesty, the bow of Lord Viṣṇu along with the divine energy of the same Lord, that had existed in him (so far), O Pārvatī !"

** This is also borne out by verse 11 of this very Canto, given below.

अक्षय्यं मधुहन्तारं जानामि त्वां सुरेश्वरम् । धनुषोऽस्य परामर्शात् स्वस्ति तेऽस्तु परंतप ॥१७॥
एते सुरगणाः सर्वे निरीक्षन्ते समागताः । त्वामप्रतिमकर्माणमप्रतिद्वन्द्वमाहवे ॥१८॥
न चेयं मम काकुत्स्थ व्रीडा भवितुमर्हति । त्वया त्रैलोक्यनाथेन यदहं विमुखीकृतः ॥१९॥
शरमप्रतिमं राम मोक्तुमर्हसि सुव्रत । शरमोक्षे गमिष्यामि महेन्द्रं पर्वतोत्तमम् ॥२०॥

"When in the past (the dominion of) the earth was bestowed by me on Sage Kaśyapa, Kaśyapa spoke to me as follows:—'You must no longer inhabit my dominion.' (13) Enjoined thus and obeying the command of my preceptor (Kaśyapa), I do not remain on earth at night from that time onward inasmuch as a pledge has been taken by me to that effect before Kaśyapa, which is a well-known fact, O Rāma! (14) Be pleased, therefore, O heroic scion of Raghu, not to put an end to my present (unhampered) movement (in all the three worlds). I shall retire to Mount Mahendra, the foremost of mountains, with the speed of thought. (15) Peerless worlds have actually been earned by me by dint of asceticism, O Rāma! Put an end to my title to them by means of your superb shaft. Let there be no loss of time. (16) From the fact of your having (not only) seized (but also strung and drawn) this bow (of Lord Viṣṇu, which could be strung by none else) I conclude you to be (no other than) the imperishable Lord Viṣṇu (the suzerain Lord of gods), the Slayer of the demon Madhu. Let everything be well with you, O chastiser of foes! (17) All these hosts of gods gathered together (here) are looking at you, whose deeds are incomparable and who are unrivalled in combat. (17-18) This powerlessness of mine in your presence, O scion of Kakutstha, cannot be a matter for shame to me, since I stand worsted by (none else than) the Lord of (all) the three worlds. (19) Be pleased, O Rāma of noble vows, to discharge your matchless arrow. On your having discharged the arrow I shall return to Mount Mahendra, the foremost of mountains." (20)

तथा ब्रुवति रामे तु जामदग्न्ये प्रतापवान् । रामो दाशरथिः श्रीमांश्चिक्षेप शरमुत्तमम् ॥२१॥
स हतान् दृश्य रामेण स्वांल्लोकांस्तपसार्जितान् । जामदग्न्यो जगामाशु महेन्द्रं पर्वतोत्तमम् ॥२२॥
ततो वितिमिराः सर्वा दिशश्चोपदिशस्तथा । सुराः सर्षिगणा रामं प्रशशंसुरुदायुधम् ॥२३॥
रामं दाशरथिं रामो जामदग्न्यः प्रपूजितः । ततः प्रदक्षिणीकृत्य जगामात्मगतिं प्रभुः ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे षट्सप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७६ ॥

Even while Parasurāma, son of Jamadagni, was speaking as aforesaid, the mighty and glorious Rāma, son of Daśaratha, discharged the superb shaft. (21) Finding his own (prospective) realms earned by dint of asceticism ruined by Śrī Rāma, Paraśurāma (son of Jamadagni) immediately returned to Mount Mahendra, the foremost of mountains. (22) Thereupon all the quarters and (even) so the intermediate corners intervening them were rid of darkness. The gods including the hosts of Ṛṣis (accompanying them) glorified Śrī Rāma, who stood with the uplifted bow. (23) Having walked clockwise round Śrī Rāma, son of Daśaratha, the mighty Paraśurāma (son of Jamadagni), highly honoured (by Śrī Rāma), then retired to his own abode (on Mount Mahendra). (24)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-six in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXVII

On the departure of Paraśurāma Śrī Rāma hands over the bow of Lord Viṣṇu to Varuṇa (the god of water) and, sending his army ahead, King Daśaratha enters Ayodhya. After some days Prince Yudhājit, Bharata's maternal uncle takes away Bharata and Śatrughna to his father's capital.

गते रामे प्रशान्तात्मा रामो दाशरथिर्धनुः । वरुणायाप्रमेयाय ददौ हस्ते महायशाः ॥ १ ॥
अभिवाद्य ततो रामो वसिष्ठप्रमुखानृषीन् । पितरं विकलं दृष्ट्वा प्रोवाच रघुनन्दनः ॥ २ ॥
जामदग्न्यो गतो रामः प्रयातु चतुरङ्गिणी । अयोध्याभिमुखी सेना त्वया नाथेन पालिता ॥ ३ ॥
रामस्य वचनं श्रुत्वा राजा दशरथः सुतम् । बाहुभ्यां सम्परिष्वज्य मूर्ध्न्युपाघ्राय राघवम् ॥ ४ ॥
गतो राम इति श्रुत्वा हृष्टः प्रमुदितो नृपः । पुनर्जातं तदा मेने पुत्रमात्मानमेव च ॥ ५ ॥
चोदयामास तां सेनां जगामाशु ततः पुरीम् । पताकाध्वजिनीं रम्यां तूर्योद्घुष्टनिनादिताम् ॥ ६ ॥
सिक्तराजपथारम्यां प्रकीर्णकुसुमोत्कराम् । राजप्रवेशसुमुखैः पौरैर्मङ्गलपाणिभिः ॥ ७ ॥
सम्पूर्णां प्राविशद् राजा जनौघैः समलंकृताम् ।

Paraśurāma having left, the highly illustrious Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha), whose mind was completely at rest, made over (as a trust) the bow in his hand to Varuṇa (the god of water) of immeasurable strength. (1) Greeting the sages headed by Vasiṣṭha and seeing his father (who had apparently failed to notice the discomfiture and departure of Paraśurāma) perturbed (over the menacing attitude of Paraśurāma), Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) then submitted to his father (as follows) :—(2) "Paraśurāma, son of Jamadagni, has departed. Let the army consisting of four limbs (*viz*, elephants, chariots, horsemen and foot soldiers) and protected by you, its master, (therefore) march in the direction of Ayodhya." (3) Hearing the request of Śrī Rāma, King Daśaratha closely folded in his arms his son, the foremost of Raghu's race, and smelt his head (as a gesture of affection). (4) Delighted, nay, overjoyed to hear that Paraśurāma had (already) left, the king thought his son as well as himself reborn on that occasion. (5) He urged his army forward and then speedily reached his delightful capital. The king (presently) entered in state the city decorated with flags and buntings and rendered noisy by fanfares of trumpets. It looked charming with its highways sprinkled with water and was strewn with heaps of flowers. It was brimful with citizens with their faces blooming over the return of their king and carrying auspicious articles in their hands, and was fully graced with multitudes of men.

पौरैः प्रत्युद्गतो दूरं द्विजैश्च पुरवासिभिः ॥ ८ ॥
पुत्रैरनुगतः श्रीमान् श्रीमद्भिश्च महायशाः । प्रविवेश गृहं राजा हिमवत्सदृशं प्रियम् ॥ ९ ॥
ननन्द स्वजनै राजा गृहे कामैः सुपूजितः । कौसल्या च सुमित्रा च कैकेयी च सुमध्यमा ॥ १० ॥

वधूप्रतिग्रहे युक्ता याश्चान्या राजयोषितः । ततः सीतां महाभागामूर्मिलां च यशस्विनीम् ॥११॥
कुशध्वजसुते चोभे जगृहुर्नृपयोषितः । मङ्गलालापनैर्होमैः शोभिताः क्षौमवाससः ॥१२॥
देवतायतनान्याशु सर्वास्ताः प्रत्यपूजयन् । अभिवाद्याभिवाद्यांश्च सर्वा राजसुतास्तदा ॥१३॥
रेमिरे मुदिताः सर्वा भर्तृभिः सहिता रहः । कृतदाराः कृतास्त्राश्च सधनाः ससुहृज्जनाः ॥१४॥
शुश्रूषमाणाः पितरं वर्तयन्ति नरर्षभाः ।

Met far in advance by the citizens as well as by Brahmans inhabiting the capital, and followed by his glorious sons, the glorious and highly illustrious king (now) entered his beloved palace vying with the Himalaya mountain (in whiteness and height). (6—9) Duly entertained with luxuries by his own people, the king rejoiced at his house. Kausalyā and Sumitrā as well as the graceful Kaikeyī and whatever other queens there were busied themselves with the ceremonious reception of their daughters-in-law. Thereupon the queens conducted (into the gynaeceum) the highly blessed Sītā and the illustrious Ūrmilā as well as both the daughters of Kuśadhwaja (Māṇḍavī and Śrutakīrti). All those queens forthwith got the brides to offer worship to the temples (inside as well as outside the gynaeceum)—the brides, who were greeted with benedictions (pronounced by the priests), looked splendid after having offered oblations to the sacred fire (in order to solemnize their entry into the gynaeceum) and were clad in silken robes. Having saluted on that occasion those who deserved to be saluted, all the princesses without exception happily enjoyed life with their husbands in their private apartments. (Duly) married and taught the use of (various) missiles (and weapons) and endowed with riches, the princes (who were jewels among men) lived in the company of their friends and relatives, rendering service to their father.

कस्यचित्त्वथ कालस्य राजा दशरथः सुतम् ॥१५॥
भरतं कैकयीपुत्रमब्रवीद् रघुनन्दनः । अयं केकयराजस्य पुत्रो वसति पुत्रक ॥१६॥
त्वां नेतुमागतो वीरो युधाजिन्मातुलस्तव । श्रुत्वा दशरथस्यैतद् भरतः कैकयीसुतः ॥१७॥
गमनायाभिचक्राम शत्रुघ्नसहितस्तदा । आपृच्छ्य पितरं शूरो रामं चाक्लिष्टकारिणम् ॥१८॥
मातॄश्चापि नरश्रेष्ठः शत्रुघ्नसहितो ययौ । युधाजित् प्राप्य भरतं सशत्रुघ्नं प्रहर्षितः ॥१९॥
स्वपुरं प्राविशद् वीरः पिता तस्य तुतोष ह । गते च भरते रामो लक्ष्मणश्च महाबलः ॥२०॥
पितरं देवसंकाशं पूजयामासतुस्तदा । पितुराज्ञां पुरस्कृत्य पौरकार्याणि सर्वशः ॥२१॥
चकार रामः सर्वाणि प्रियाणि च हितानि च । मातृभ्यो मातृकार्याणि कृत्वा परमयन्त्रितः ॥२२॥
गुरूणां गुरुकार्याणि काले कालेऽन्ववैक्षत । एवं दशरथः प्रीतो ब्राह्मणा नैगमास्तथा ॥२३॥
रामस्य शीलवृत्तेन सर्वे विषयवासिनः । तेषामतियशा लोके रामः सत्यपराक्रमः ॥२४॥
स्वयम्भूरिव भूतानां बभूव गुणवत्तरः । रामश्च सीतया सार्धं विजहार बहूनृतून् ॥२५॥
मनस्वी तद्गतमनास्तस्या हृदि समर्पितः । प्रिया तु सीता रामस्य दाराः पितृकृता इति ॥२६॥
गुणाद् रूपगुणाच्चापि प्रीतिर्भूयोऽभिवर्धते । तस्याश्च भर्ता द्विगुणं हृदये परिवर्तते ॥२७॥
अन्तर्गतमपि व्यक्तमाख्याति हृदयं हृदा ।
तस्य भूयो विशेषेण मैथिली जनकात्मजा । देवताभिः समा रूपे सीता श्रीरिव रूपिणी ॥२८॥

तया स राजर्षिसुतोऽभिकामया समेयिवानुत्तमराजकन्यया ।
अतीव रामः शुशुभे मुदान्वितो विभुः श्रिया विष्णुरिवामरेश्वरः ॥२९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्ये बालकाण्डे सप्तसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७७ ॥

बालकाण्डं सम्पूर्णम्

Some time after this, one day, King Daśaratha, the delight of the Raghus, spoke to Bharata, the son of Kaikeyī (as follows):—(10—15) "This son of the king of Kekaya, the heroic Yudhājit, your maternal uncle, who has come to take you (to his father's capital), is tarrying (here in the hope of being allowed to take you)." Hearing this remark of Daśaratha, Bharata, son of Kaikeyī, forthwith got ready to depart along with Śatrughna. (Nay,) taking leave of his father (King Daśaratha) and Śrī Rāma, who did (great) things without (much) exertion, as well as of (all) his (three) mothers (Kausalyā, Sumitrā and Kaikeyī), the heroic Bharata (a jewel among men) left with Śatrughna (for the kingdom of Kekaya). Highly rejoiced to get hold of Bharata along with Śatrughna, the valiant Yudhājit (reached and) duly entered his town, and his father felt gratified at this. Bharata as well as Śatrughna having left, the very mighty Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa began to serve their god-like father when the occasion demanded it. Placing his father's command above all (else), Śrī Rāma ever did in every way all business relating to the citizens, which was dear to them as well as conducive to their interests. Doing (all) the work of his (three) mothers for their sake, Śrī Rāma, who was highly self-restrained, attended from time to time to the important business of his elders. In this way King Daśaratha, the Brahmans as well as the traders,—in fact, all the people of the kingdom (of Ayodhya) were pleased with the disposition and conduct of Srī Rāma. Srī Rāma, who was endowed with true (unfailing) valour, outshone (all) his brothers in reputation and, like Brahmā (the self-born creator), excelled (all) created beings in merits. The high-minded Śrī Rāma, whose heart was set on his spouse and who stood enthroned in her heart, enjoyed life with her for many months. Sītā was dear to Śrī Rāma as a partner made available (to him) by his father. (Nay) because of her (manifold) virtues and comeliness of form his affection (for her) grew all the more. Her husband too (because of his excellences and lovely exterior) gained a doubly secure footing in her heart. (16—27) Sītā, the princess of Mithilā and daughter of Janaka, who compared with goddesses in bodily charm and was beauty incarnate as it were, could vividly read in minute detail with her mind even that which existed in the inmost heart of Śrī Rāma. (28) United (in wedlock) with that foremost princess, who was the sole object of his love and whose love was centred in him, Śrī Rāma, the aforesaid son of King Daśaratha (a royal sage), looked most charming and full of joy, (even) as the all-pervading Viṣṇu, the suzerain Lord of gods, in the company of Śrī (the goddess of fortune). (29)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-seven in the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

END OF BĀLA-KĀṆḌA

श्रीसीतारामचन्द्राभ्यां नमः

श्रीमद्वाल्मीकीयरामायणम्

अयोध्याकाण्डम्

प्रथमः सर्गः

The Valmiki-Ramayana

Book Two

(Ayodhya-Kanda)

Canto I

Bharata having left for his maternal grandfather's capital along
with Śatrughna, Emperor Daśaratha makes up his mind
to install Śrī Rama as his regent and, summoning
a number of princes for consultation, confers
with them on the subject.

गच्छता मातुलकुलं भरतेन तदानघः । शत्रुघ्नो नित्यशत्रुघ्नो नीतः प्रीतिपुरस्कृतः ॥ १ ॥
स तत्र न्यवसद् भ्रात्रा सह सत्कारसत्कृतः । मातुलेनाश्वपतिना पुत्रस्नेहेन लालितः ॥ २ ॥
तत्रापि निवसन्तौ तौ तर्प्यमाणौ च कामतः । भ्रातरौ स्मरतां वीरौ वृद्धं दशरथं नृपम् ॥ ३ ॥
राजापि तौ महातेजाः सस्मार प्रोषितौ सुतौ । उभौ भरतशत्रुघ्नौ महेन्द्रवरुणोपमौ ॥ ४ ॥
सर्वे एव तु तस्येष्टाश्चत्वारः पुरुषर्षभाः । स्वशरीराद् विनिर्वृत्ताश्चत्वार इव बाहवः ॥ ५ ॥
तेषामपि महातेजा रामो रतिकरः पितुः । स्वयम्भूरिव भूतानां बभूव गुणवत्तरः ॥ ६ ॥
स हि देवैरुदीर्णस्य रावणस्य वधार्थिभिः । अर्थितो मानुषे लोके जज्ञे विष्णुः सनातनः ॥ ७ ॥
कौसल्या शुशुभे तेन पुत्रेणामिततेजसा । यथा वरेण देवानामदितिर्वज्रपाणिना ॥ ८ ॥

(As has already been stated in verses 17—19 of the foregoing Canto) the sinless Śatrughna, the destroyer of the lasting enemies (concupiscence etc.) was taken away on that occasion by Bharata while the latter was proceeding to his maternal uncle's home, full of affection as he (Śatrughna) was (for Bharata). (1) Entertained with hospitality by his maternal uncle (Yudhājit), an owner of horses, and fondled with parental affection, he tarried there (in his maternal grandfather's house) with his (younger half—) brother (Śatrughna). (2) Continuing there and even though being gratified with desired objects, the two gallant brothers thought of their aged father, King Daśaratha. (3) The highly glorious emperor too remembered both his aforesaid sons, Bharata and Śatrughna, who vied (severally) with the mighty Indra (the ruler of gods) and Varuṇa (the god presiding over the waters) and were away from their home. (4) All the four princes, who were veritable jewels among men, were equally dear to him like four arms sprung from one's own person. (5) Of them, however, the highly glorious Śrī Rāma afforded (ecstatic) delight to him and was more richly endowed with excellences (than others) as Brahmā (the self-born creator) is among created beings. (6) For, entreated by the gods, seeking the destruction of the haughty Rāvaṇa, the eternal Lord Viṣṇu (Himself) was born on the mortal plane as Śrī Rāma. (7) Queen Kausalyā (the mother of Śrī Rāma) shone with that son, possessed (as he was) of infinite glory, (even) as Aditi did with (her son) Indra (the wielder of thunderbolt), the foremost of gods. (8)

स हि रूपोपपन्नश्च वीर्यवाननसूयकः । भूमावनुपमः सूनुर्गुणैर्दशरथोपमः ॥ ९ ॥
स च नित्यं प्रशान्तात्मा मृदुपूर्वं च भाषते । उच्यमानोऽपि परुषं नोत्तरं प्रतिपद्यते ॥१०॥
कदाचिदुपकारेण कृतेनैकेन तुष्यति । न स्मरत्यपकाराणां शतमप्यात्मवत्तया ॥११॥
शीलवृद्धैर्ज्ञानवृद्धैर्वयोवृद्धैश्च सज्जनैः । कथयन्नास्त वै नित्यमस्त्रयोग्यान्तरेष्वपि ॥१२॥
बुद्धिमान् मधुराभाषी पूर्वभाषी प्रियंवदः । वीर्यवान्न च वीर्येण महता स्वेन विस्मितः ॥१३॥
न चानृतकथो विद्वान् वृद्धानां प्रतिपूजकः । अनुरक्तः प्रजाभिश्च प्रजाश्चाप्यनुरज्यते ॥१४॥
सानुक्रोशो जितक्रोधो ब्राह्मणप्रतिपूजकः । दीनानुकम्पी धर्मज्ञो नित्यं प्रग्रहवाञ्छुचिः ॥१५॥
कुलोचितमतिः क्षात्रं स्वधर्मं बहु मन्यते । मन्यते परया प्रीत्या महत् स्वर्गफलं ततः ॥१६॥
नाश्रेयसि रतो यश्च न विरुद्धकथारुचिः । उत्तरोत्तरयुक्तीनां वक्ता वाचस्पतिर्यथा ॥१७॥

He was indeed possessed of physical charm, full of valour and free from censoriousness. He was incomparable on earth as a son and was a replica of Daśaratha in point of virtues. (9) He was ever tranquil of mind and spoke softly without being accosted. Nay, he did not retort even though spoken harshly to (10) He felt gratified (even) with a single good turn casually rendered and did not take to heart (even) a hundred wrongs because of his mastery over his self. (11) He ever used to converse only with pious men senior to him in point of moral worth, enlightenment and age, even at times of respite from his training in the use of missiles. (12) He was talented and suave of speech, took the initiative in speaking (with others), affable and valiant, yet not elated with his extraordinary prowess. (13) He never told a lie, was learned and a respecter of his elders, nay, was loved by the people and also loved the people (in his turn). (14) He was full of compassion, had conquered anger, was a votary of the Brahmans, commiserated the miserable, knew what is right, always exercised self-control and practised purity (both internal and external). (15) With his mind intent on what was worthy of his race he made much of his duty as a Kṣatriya and with great fondness regarded heaven as the eminent reward following from it. (16) He never took delight in an act which was not conducive to blessedness, had no relish for profane talks and, like the sage Bṛhaspati (*lit.*, a master of eloquence), advanced arguments and counter-arguments (in support of his contention). (17)

अरोगस्तरुणो वाग्मी वपुष्मान् देशकालवित् । लोके पुरुषसारज्ञः साधुरेको विनिर्मितः ॥१८॥
स तु श्रेष्ठैर्गुणैर्युक्तः प्रजानां पार्थिवात्मजः । बहिश्चर इव प्राणो बभूव गुणतः प्रियः ॥१९॥
सर्वविद्याव्रतस्नातो यथावत् साङ्गवेदवित् । इष्वस्त्रे च पितुः श्रेष्ठो बभूव भरताग्रजः ॥२०॥

कल्याणाभिजनः साधुरदीनः सत्यवागृजुः । वृद्धैरभिविनीतश्च द्विजैर्धर्मार्थदर्शिभिः ॥२१॥
धर्मकामार्थतत्त्वज्ञः स्मृतिमान् प्रतिभानवान् । लौकिके समयाचारे कृतकल्पो विशारदः ॥२२॥
निभृतः संवृताकारो गुप्तमन्त्रः सहायवान् । अमोघक्रोधहर्षश्च त्यागसंयमकालवित् ॥२३॥

He was free from diseases, youthful, eloquent and possessed of a robust body and knew the (right) place and time (for action) He was the only pious soul, evolved in the world, who could know the worth of every individual (appearing before him). (18) Endowed with superb qualities, the aforesaid prince actually grew to be the favourite of the people by virtue of his (manifold) excellences and was like their (very) life moving outside. (19) Śrī Rāma (the elder brother of Bharata) had mastered all sciences and concluded all sacred vows, had duly studied (all) the (four) Vedas including the branches of knowledge auxiliary to them and proved superior (even) to his father (Emperor Daśaratha, a unique bowman himself) in archery as well as in the use of missiles propelled by force of mystic spells. (20) A source of (all) blessings, beneficent, (ever) undepressed, truthful of speech and guileless, he had been instructed all round by elderly Brahmans possessing insight into the moral principles and secular interests. (21) He knew the truth about the principles of righteousness, material enjoyment and prosperity, was possessed of a keen memory and perspicacious. He had acquired proficiency in the discharge of his secular duties and was well-versed in Vedic rites (too). (22) He was modest and kept his feelings concealed and his deliberations secret and attracted (good many) followers. His wrath and pleasure (both) were unfailing and he knew when to release funds and when to withhold them. (23)

दृढभक्तिः स्थिरप्रज्ञो नासद्ग्राही न दुर्वचः । निस्तन्द्रीरप्रमत्तश्च स्वदोषपरदोषवित् ॥२४॥
शास्त्रज्ञश्च कृतज्ञश्च पुरुषान्तरकोविदः । यः प्रग्रहानुग्रहयोर्यथान्यायं विचक्षणः ॥२५॥
सत्संग्रहानुग्रहणे स्थानविन्निग्रहस्य च । आयकर्मण्युपायज्ञः संदृष्टव्ययकर्मवित् ॥२६॥
श्रैष्ठ्यं शास्त्रसमूहेषु प्राप्तो व्यामिश्रकेषु च । अर्थधर्मौ च संगृह्य सुखतन्त्रो न चालसः ॥२७॥
वैहारिकाणां शिल्पानां विज्ञातार्थविभागवित् । आरोहे विनये चैव युक्तो वारणवाजिनाम् ॥२८॥

He was unflinching in devotion and stable of mind, did not gather unworthy men about him nor did he utter foul words. He was free from sloth and (ever) vigilant and was alive to the faults of his own people as well as to those of others. (24) He was well-versed in sacred lore and recognized the services of others, could read men's mind and was clever in meting out punishment and bestowing favours according to the principles of equity. (25) He was expert in gathering pious men about him and patronizing them, and knew where to use violence. He was conversant with the methods of tapping the sources of income (without oppressing the people) and (also) knew the art of expending money as laid down in the Śāstras (works on political economy)*. (26) He had acquired proficiency in the Śāstras (the various departments of knowledge) as well as in works (such as dramas) written in a mixed tongue (*viz*, Sanskrit mixed with a Prākṛta dialect) and enjoyed the pleasures of sense keeping inviolate the principles of righteousness and maintaining the soundness of his finances; nay, he never remained inactive. (27) He was a connoisseur of arts (such as vocal and instrumental music, drawing etc.) intended to entertain oneself and knew how to allocate funds (to various items of expenditure).* He was an expert in riding on and taming elephants and horses. (28)

---

* In the Mahābhārata the celestial sage Nārada says to Yudhiṣṭhira—

कच्चिदायस्य चार्धेन चतुर्भागेन वा पुनः । पादभागैस्त्रिभिर्वापि व्ययः संशुद्धयते तव ॥

(Sabhā , V. 71)

"Is your expenditure duly carried on with one-half or one-fourth or three-fourths of your income?"

धनुर्वेदविदां श्रेष्ठो लोकेऽतिरथसम्मतः । अभियाता प्रहर्ता च सेनानयविशारदः ॥२९॥
अप्रधृष्यश्च संग्रामे क्रुद्धैरपि सुरासुरैः । अनसूयो जितक्रोधो न दृप्तो न च मत्सरी ॥३०॥
नावज्ञेयश्च भूतानां न च कालवशानुगः । एवं श्रेष्ठैर्गुणैर्युक्तः प्रजानां पार्थिवात्मजः ॥३१॥
सम्मतस्त्रिषु लोकेषु वसुधायाः क्षमागुणैः । बुद्ध्या बृहस्पतेस्तुल्यो वीर्ये चापि शचीपतेः ॥३२॥
तथा सर्वप्रजाकान्तैः प्रीतिसंजननैः पितुः । गुणैर्विरुरुचे रामो दीप्तः सूर्य इवांशुभिः ॥३३॥

He was the foremost of those knowing the science of archery and was esteemed in the world (even) by Atirathas (those who fight a number of Mahārathas alone)†. He not only knew how to make an inroad (into an enemy's stronghold) but also how to take the offensive (in a war) and was skilled in disposing the army in a particular battle-array. (29) He could not be overpowered in an encounter even by the gods and demons in rage. He was devoid of a carping spirit, had conquered wrath, was never elated and never gave way to jealousy. (30) He could not be disregarded (with impunity) by created beings and was not subject to the control of Time. Endowed with the foregoing noblest virtues, Śrī Rāma (son of Emperor Daśaratha) was esteemed not only by the people (of Ayodhya) but in all the three worlds (*viz*, heaven, earth and the intermediate region). He was a compeer of Mother Earth (the repository of all riches) in forbearance and other (allied) virtues and vied with the sage Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods) in wisdom and with Indra (the consort of Śachī) in valour. (31-32) (Nay) like the sun-god resplendent with his rays Śrī Rāma shone brightly by virtue of his (aforesaid) excellences loved by all the people (of Ayodhya) and affording delight to his father (Emperor Daśaratha). (33)

तमेवंवृत्तसम्पन्नमप्रधृष्यपराक्रमम् । लोकनाथोपमं नाथमकामयत मेदिनी ॥३४॥
एतैस्तु बहुभिर्युक्तं गुणैरनुपमैः सुतम् । दृष्ट्वा दशरथो राजा चक्रे चिन्तां परंतपः ॥३५॥
अथ राज्ञो बभूवैव वृद्धस्य चिरजीविनः । प्रीतिरेषा कथं रामो राजा स्यान्मयि जीवति ॥३६॥
एषा ह्यस्त परा प्रीतिर्हृदि सम्परिवर्तते । कदा नाम सुतं द्रक्ष्याम्यभिषिक्तमहं प्रियम् ॥३७॥
वृद्धिकामो हि लोकस्य सर्वभूतानुकम्पकः । मत्तः प्रियतरो लोके पर्जन्य इव वृष्टिमान् ॥३८॥

---

* We read in Śrimad Bhāgavata:—

धर्माय यशसेऽर्थाय कामाय स्वजनाय च । पञ्चधा विभजन् वित्तमिहामुत्र च मोदते ॥
(VIII. xix. 37)

"A householder dividing his income into five parts (and utilizing it) for the purpose of 1. acquiring religious merit, 2. celebrity, 3. (earning more) wealth, 4. enjoying pleasures and 5. maintaining his own people rejoices in this as well as in the life beyond."

† For the definition of a Mahāratha (a great car-warrior) *vide* foot-note below I. v. 20 above on p 26 of Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa Number-I.

यमशक्रसमो वीर्ये बृहस्पतिसमो मतौ । महीधरसमो धृत्यां मत्तश्च गुणवत्तरः ॥३९॥
महीमहमिमां कृत्स्नामधितिष्ठन्तमात्मजम् । अनेन वयसा दृष्ट्वा यथा स्वर्गमवाप्नुयाम् ॥४०॥

Goddess Earth (herself) sought for her protector the aforesaid prince, who was endowed with such (a lofty) character, was possessed of valour that could not be subdued and who vied with the guardians of the spheres (in might and splendour). (34) Seeing his (eldest) son (Śrī Rāma) adorned with these manifold incomparable virtues, Emperor Daśaratha, the chastiser of his enemies, for his part reflected (as follows). (35) The thought forthwith entered the mind of the aged and long-lived emperor: "How should Rāma be crowned king during my very lifetime? How can this delightful event take place? (36) When shall I actually behold my beloved son (Śrī Rāma) installed (in the office of Prince Regent)? This alone is the supreme desire revolving in my heart. (37) Commiserating all created beings, he truly seeks the advancement of (all) the people. Like a rainy cloud he is dearer to the world than myself. (38) He is a compeer of Yama and Indra in valour, vies with Bṛhaspati in understanding, resembles a mountain in firmness and excels me in qualities. (39) Seeing at this (ripe) age my (aforesaid) son (Śrī Rāma) holding sway over this entire globe, let me ascend to heaven in due course." (40)

इत्येवं विविधैस्तैस्तैरन्यपार्थिवदुर्लभैः । शिष्टैरपरिमेयैश्च लोके लोकोत्तरैर्गुणैः ॥४१॥
तं समीक्ष्य तदा राजा युक्तं समुदितैर्गुणैः । निश्चित्य सचिवैः सार्धं यौवराज्यममन्यत ॥४२॥
दिव्यन्तरिक्षे भूमौ च घोरमुत्पातजं भयम् । संचचक्षेऽथ मेधावी शरीरे चात्मनो जराम् ॥४३॥
पूर्णचन्द्राननस्याथ शोकापनुदमात्मनः । लोके रामस्य बुबुधे सम्प्रियत्वं महात्मनः ॥४४॥
आत्मनश्च प्रजानां च श्रेयसे च प्रियेण च । प्राप्ते काले स धर्मात्मा भक्त्या त्वरितवान् नृपः ॥४५॥
नानानगरवास्तव्यान् पृथग्जानपदानपि । समानिनाय मेदिन्यां प्रधानान् पृथिवीपतिः ॥४६॥
तान् वेश्मनानाभरणैर्यथार्हं प्रतिपूजितान् । ददर्शालंकृतो राजा प्रजापतिरिव प्रजाः ॥४७॥
न तु केकयराजानं जनकं वा नराधिपः । त्वरया चानयामास पश्चात् तौ श्रोष्यतः प्रियम् ॥४८॥

Reflecting thus and perceiving Śrī Rāma endowed with the aforesaid manifold excellences, difficult to find in other kings, as well as with all (other) innumerable excellences uncommon in the world, and deliberating with his ministers, the emperor (Daśaratha) decided to install him as Prince Regent. (41-42) The shrewd emperor forthwith spoke (to the ministers) about the grave risk foreshadowed by the portents appearing in the heaven, in the aerial region as well as on earth, as also of old age telling on his own body. (43) On the other hand, he learnt (from the ministers) of the great popularity of the high-souled Śrī Rāma, whose countenance resembled the full moon (in its pleasing property), —a popularity which assuaged the emperor's own agony (caused by the thought of those evil portents). (4) Nay, for his own good as well as for the good of the people as also with a view to their gratification and out of love (for them) that pious monarch urged the ministers to make haste, when the (opportune) time (for the installation) came. (45) The emperor (caused to be) summoned (to his capital) the prominent citizens of various cities as also the rulers of different parts of the country on the globe. (46) Decked with jewels (himself), the king saw them when they had been honourably lodged in quarters and presented with various ornaments according to their (respective) rank, (even) as Brahmā (the lord of created beings) would see his progeny. (47) In a hurry, however, Daśaratha (the ruler of men) invited neither the king of the Kekayas nor King Janaka and consoled himself with the thought that the two monarchs would hear the delightful news afterwards.* (48)

अथोपविष्टे नृपतौ तस्मिन् परपुरार्दने । ततः प्रविविशुः शेषा राजानो लोकसम्मताः ॥४९॥
अथ राजवितीर्णेषु विविधेष्वासनेषु च । राजानमेवाभिमुखा निषेदुर्नियता नृपाः ॥५०॥
स लब्धमानैर्विनयान्वितैर्नृपैः पुरालयैर्जानपदैश्च मानवैः ।
उपोपविष्टैर्नृपतिर्वृतो बभौ सहस्रचक्षुर्भगवानिवामरैः ॥५१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे प्रथमः सर्गः ॥ १ ॥

Now that the aforesaid monarch (Emperor Daśaratha), who was capable of destroying the enemy's stronghold, had taken his seat (in the assembly called by him), the other kings, who were esteemed of the people, forthwith entered the assembly. (49) The kings then sat down in a disciplined way facing the emperor alone on the different seats allotted (to them) by the emperor. (50) Surrounded by kings that had received attentions (from the emperor) and were full of modesty, as well as by (prominent) men who had their residence in the city (of Ayodhya) or belonged to the other parts of the country, and who (all) sat close to the emperor (in order to be able to hear distinctly what he said), the aforesaid monarch shone like the glorious Indra (the thousand-eyed god)† in the midst of (other) gods. (51)

Thus ends Canto One in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्वितीयः सर्गः

Canto II

Daśaratha apprises the assembly of his intention to retire from active rule after relegating the power to Śrī Rāma's able hands and the councillors with one voice say ditto to the proposal and urge the emperor to expedite matters.

ततः परिषदं सर्वामामन्त्र्य वसुधाधिपः । हितमुद्धर्षणं चैवमुवाच प्रथितं वचः ॥ १ ॥

---

* In the event of the king of the Kekayas and King Janaka being invited to attend the installation ceremony, Bharata and Śatrughna would have naturally accompanied their maternal grandfather and the presence of all these would have confirmed the installation of Śrī Rāma and the whole course of history would have altogether changed. Śrī Rāma would not have proceeded to the forest then, so that the very purpose of his advent would have been defeated. In order to avert this contingency the gods changed the mind of Daśaratha and deterred him from inviting the king of the Kekayas and King Janaka, two of his nearest relations, to the installation ceremony.

† There is a pun on the word "Sahasra-Chakṣu" in the above verse. A king is also credited with a thousand eyes in the shape of a network of spies employed by him in order to ascertain the loyalty of his subjects and to detect the presence of any fifth columnists within his kingdom, as also to hunt up gangs of robbers and thieves. It is on account of these spies that a king has also been designated in our works on political science as a Chāra-Chakṣuṣ (one having spies for one's eyes).

दुन्दुभिस्वरकल्पेन गम्भीरेणानुनादिना । स्वरेण महता राजा जीमूत इव नादयन् ॥ २ ॥
राजलक्षणयुक्तेन कान्तेनानुपमेन च । उवाच रसयुक्तेन स्वरेण नृपतिर्नृपान् ॥ ३ ॥
विदितं भवतामेतद् यथा मे राज्यमुत्तमम् । पूर्वकैर्मम राजेन्द्रैः सुतवत् परिपालितम् ॥ ४ ॥
सोऽहमिक्ष्वाकुभिः सर्वैर्नरेन्द्रैः प्रतिपालितम् । श्रेयसा योक्तुमिच्छामि सुखार्हमखिलं जगत् ॥ ५ ॥
मयाप्याचरितं पूर्वैः पन्थानमनुगच्छता । प्रजा नित्यमनिद्रेण यथाशक्त्यभिरक्षिताः ॥ ६ ॥
इदं शरीरं कृत्स्नस्य लोकस्य चरता हितम् । पाण्डुरस्यातपत्रस्यच्छायायां जरितं मया ॥ ७ ॥
प्राप्य वर्षसहस्राणि बहून्यायूंषि जीवतः । जीर्णस्यास्य शरीरस्य विश्रान्तिमभिरोचये ॥ ८ ॥
राजप्रभावजुष्टां च दुर्वहामजितेन्द्रियैः । परिश्रान्तोऽस्मि लोकस्य गुर्वीं धर्मधुरं वहन् ॥ ९ ॥

Addressing the whole assembly and resounding the air like a (thundering) cloud with his deep, sonorous and loud voice resembling the sound of a kettledrum, Daśaratha, the suzerain lord of the (entire) globe, then uttered the following wholesome, exhilarating and unambiguous words. In a pleasing, melodious and incomparable voice endowed with the characteristics of a king's voice, the emperor spoke to the kings (in particular as follows): (1—3) "It is (well) known to you (all) how this foremost kingdom of mine was protected in every way as one's (own) son by emperors that have preceded me. (4) As such I wish to endow the whole world, ruled over (in the past) by the various Ikṣwāku kings and (therefore) deserving happiness (even in the days to come), with unique good luck (in the form of Śrī Rāma's rule). (5) The people have always been protected on all sides to the best of my ability even by me regardless of personal comforts, traversing (as I did) the path trodden by my forbears. (6) This body has been worn out in the shade of a white umbrella by me while working for the good of the whole world. (7) I desire to give rest to this worn-out body, which has (now) run many rounds of a human span of life (measuring a hundred years on an average), having attained an age of thousands of (sixty thousand) years. (8) Carrying (on my shoulders as I have done all these long years) the great burden of governing the people with righteousness, a burden which can be borne (only) by virtue of kingly power and is hard to bear for those of uncontrolled mind,—I (now) feel exhausted. (9)

सोऽहं विश्राममिच्छामि पुत्रं कृत्वा प्रजाहिते । संनिकृष्टानिमान् सर्वाननुमान्य द्विजर्षभान् ॥१०॥
अनुजातो हि मां सर्वैर्गुणैर्ज्येष्ठो ममात्मजः । पुरंदरसमो वीर्ये रामः परपुरंजयः ॥११॥
तं चन्द्रमिव पुष्येण युक्तं धर्मभृतां वरम् । यौवराज्ये नियोक्तास्मि प्रातः पुरुषपुंगवम् ॥१२॥
अनुरूपः स वो नाथो लक्ष्मीवाँल्लक्ष्मणाग्रजः । त्रैलोक्यमपि नाथेन येन स्यान्नाथवत्तरम् ॥१३॥
अनेन श्रेयसा सद्यः संयोक्ष्येऽहमिमां महीम् । गतक्लेशो भविष्यामि सुते तस्मिन् निवेश्य वै ॥१४॥
यदिदं मेऽनुरूपार्थं मया साधु सुमन्त्रितम् । भवन्तो मेऽनुमन्यन्तां कथं वा करवाण्यहम् ॥१५॥
यद्यप्येषा मम प्रीतिर्हितमन्यद् विचिन्त्यताम् । अन्या मध्यस्थचिन्ता तु विमर्दाभ्यधिकोदया ॥१६॥

"Placing my (eldest) son (Srī Rāma) in charge of the welfare of the people and securing the concurrence of all these jewels among the Brahmans sitting close to me (and belonging to my inner circle and therefore deeply interested in my welfare), I as such long for rest. (10) For, my eldest son, Śrī Rāma, has taken after me in all qualities, is a compeer of Indra in valour and a conqueror of the enemy's stronghold. (11) Next morning (when the asterism Puṣya will be in the ascendant) I am going to install in the office of Prince Regent that jewel among men, the foremost of those upholding (the cause of) righteousness, who resembles (in splendour and propitiousness) the moon united with the constellation Puṣya. (12) The aforesaid Rāma (the eldest brother of Lakṣmaṇa), endowed (as he is) with (unique) splendour, is your worthy protector. With him as its protector the very universe (consisting of heaven, earth and the intermediate region) will be better ruled (than it is today). (13) I shall endow this earth with this good fortune immediately and, placing the burden (of administration) on the aforesaid son (of mine), shall indeed become carefree. (14) If this step of mine has a worthy end in view and is perfectly well-advised, give you your consent to me or (tell me) how I should proceed (otherwise)? (15) Although such is my pleasure, let any other salutary course be contemplated (if this does not find favour with you). The viewpoint of the dispassionate is, however, different and is of much greater value, being an outcome of contention (of two conflicting views)." (16)

इति ब्रुवन्तं मुदिताः प्रत्यनन्दन् नृपा नृपम् । वृष्टिमन्तं महामेघं नर्दन्त इव बर्हिणः ॥१७॥
स्निग्धोऽनुनादः संजज्ञे ततो हर्षसमीरितः । जनौघोद्घुष्टसंनादो मेदिनीं कम्पयन्निव ॥१८॥
तस्य धर्मार्थविदुषो भावमाज्ञाय सर्वशः । ब्राह्मणा बलमुख्याश्च पौरजानपदैः सह ॥१९॥
समेत्य ते मन्त्रयितुं समतागतबुद्धयः । ऊचुश्च मनसा ज्ञात्वा वृद्धं दशरथं नृपम् ॥२०॥
अनेकवर्षसाहस्रो वृद्धस्त्वमसि पार्थिव । स रामं युवराजानमभिषिञ्चस्व पार्थिवम् ॥२१॥
इच्छामो हि महाबाहुं रघुवीरं महाबलम् । गजेन महता यान्तं रामं छत्रावृताननम् ॥२२॥
इति तद्वचनं श्रुत्वा राजा तेषां मनःप्रियम् । अजानन्निव जिज्ञासुरिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥२३॥
श्रुत्वैतद् वचनं यन्मे राघवं पतिमिच्छथ । राजानः संशयोऽयं मे तदिदं ब्रूत तत्त्वतः ॥२४॥
कथं न मयि धर्मेण पृथिवीमनुशासति । भवन्तो द्रष्टुमिच्छन्ति युवराजं महाबलम् ॥२५॥

Full of delight the king (assembled in the council) applauded the emperor while he was speaking as aforesaid, (even) as peacocks cheer a big rainy cloud, crying for joy. (17) Thereupon burst forth a fond acclamation, prompted with joy and raised by the concourse of men (present in the assembly), resounding and shaking the earth as it were. (18) Fully perceiving the intention of Daśaratha, who knew the principles of righteousness as well as the secular interests (of his people), nay, sitting together (in conclave) with the citizens (of Ayodhya) and the people of other territories for deliberation, and arriving at a decision with their mind, all the Brahmans as well as the army generals spoke (as follows) to the aged King Daśaratha when their mind had reached an agreement:—(19-20) "You have ruled for many thousands of years and have grown old, O ruler of the earth! Such that you are, (pray) install as Prince regent Śrī Rāma, who is fit to rule the earth. (21) Indeed we long to see the mighty-armed Śrī Rāma, a hero among the Raghus, who is possessed of great strength, riding on a huge elephant with his head canopied with the royal umbrella." (22) Hearing the aforesaid statement of the councillors, the emperor made the following reply with the intention of ascertaining what would please their mind as though not knowing it:—(23) "Since on hearing this proposal of mine you desire Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) to be your ruler, O kings, here is my doubt (on this point); therefore, (please) answer my following question correctly. (24) How is it, I ask you, that (even) while I am ruling the earth with righteousness you wish to see Śrī Rāma (who is possessed of extraordinary strength) as Prince Regent?" (25)

ते तमूचुर्महात्मानः पौरजानपदैः सह । बहवो नृप कल्याणगुणाः सन्ति सुतस्य ते ॥२६॥
गुणान् गुणवतो देव देवकल्पस्य धीमतः । प्रियानानन्दनान् कृत्स्नान् प्रवक्ष्यामोऽद्य ताञ्शृणु ॥२७॥
दिव्यैर्गुणैः शक्रसमो रामः सत्यपराक्रमः । इक्ष्वाकुभ्योऽपि सर्वेभ्यो ह्यतिरिक्तो विशाम्पते ॥२८॥
रामः सत्पुरुषो लोके सत्यः सत्यपरायणः । साक्षाद् रामाद् विनिर्वृत्तो धर्मश्चापि श्रिया सह ॥२९॥
प्रजासुखत्वे चन्द्रस्य वसुधायाः क्षमागुणैः । बुद्ध्या बृहस्पतेस्तुल्यो वीर्ये साक्षाच्छचीपतेः ॥३०॥
धर्मज्ञः सत्यसंधश्च शीलवाननसूयकः । क्षान्तः सान्त्वयिता श्लक्ष्णः कृतज्ञो विजितेन्द्रियः ॥३१॥
मृदुश्च स्थिरचित्तश्च सदा भव्योऽनसूयकः । प्रियवादी च भूतानां सत्यवादी च राघवः ॥३२॥
बहुश्रुतानां वृद्धानां ब्राह्मणानामुपासिता । तेनास्येहातुला कीर्तिर्यशस्तेजश्च वर्धते ॥३३॥

Those high-minded men in agreement with the citizens (of Ayodhya) as well as with the people of other territories replied to the emperor (as follows):—"Many benignant qualities inhere in your (eldest) son (Śrī Rāma), O protector of men! (26) We shall just recount, O lord, all the beloved and pleasing virtues (known to us) of the talented and godlike Śrī Rāma, who is a storehouse of excellences; (pray) hear about them. (27) Śrī Rāma of unfailing prowess is a compeer of Indra in superhuman virtues and has unquestionably surpassed all the scions of Ikṣwāku, O ruler of men! (28) Śrī Rāma is the (only) righteous man in the world: he is not only truthful but also solely devoted to truth. Virtue along with (the resultant) prosperity too has directly proceeded from Śrī Rāma. (29) He is a compeer of the moon in affording delight to (all) created beings, vies with the earth in his forbearance and other (allied) virtues, is a replica of the sage Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods) in wisdom and is a direct image of Indra (the spouse of Śachī) in valour. (30) He knows what is right, is true to his vow, is full of amiability and free from censoriousness, is tranquil, comforting, polite of speech and grateful and has fully mastered his senses. (31) Nay, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) is gentle and stable of mind, ever gracious and uncarping, speaks kindly to (all) living beings and is veracious (too). (32) He is a votary of the learned, his elders and the Brahmans. By virtue of such service (rendered to the learned and others) his incomparable renown, celebrity and glory stand enhanced in this world. (33)

देवासुरमनुष्याणां सर्वास्त्रेषु विशारदः । सम्यग् विद्याव्रतस्नातो यथावत् साङ्गवेदवित् ॥३४॥
गान्धर्वे च भुवि श्रेष्ठो बभूव भरताग्रजः । कल्याणाभिजनः साधुरदीनात्मा महामतिः ॥३५॥
द्विजैरभिविनीतश्च श्रेष्ठैर्धर्मार्थनैपुणैः । यदा व्रजति संग्रामं ग्रामार्थे नगरस्य वा ॥३६॥
गत्वा सौमित्रिसहितो नाविजित्य निवर्तते । संग्रामात् पुनरागत्य कुञ्जरेण रथेन वा ॥३७॥
पौरान् स्वजनवन्नित्यं कुशलं परिपृच्छति । पुत्रेष्वग्निषु दारेषु प्रेष्यशिष्यगणेषु च ॥३८॥
निखिलेनानुपूर्व्या च पिता पुत्रानिवौरसान् । शुश्रूषन्ते च वः शिष्याः कच्चिद् वर्मसु दंशिताः ॥३९॥
इति नः पुरुषव्याघ्रः सदा रामोऽभिभाषते ।

He is skilled in the use of all missiles used by gods, demons and human beings and has duly concluded his vow of studying the various sciences and has duly learnt (all) the Vedas along with the (six) branches of knowledge auxiliary to a study of the Vedas (*viz*, 1. Śikṣā or Phonetics, 2. Vyākaraṇa or Grammar, 3. Chhandas or Prosody, 4. Nirukta or Etymology, 5. Jyautiṣa or Astronomy and 6. Kalpa or the branch of knowledge prescribing the ritual and giving rules for ceremonial or sacrificial acts)*. (34) Śrī Rāma (the elder brother of Bharata) has proved to be the foremost on earth in the science of music. He is of blessed descent, saintly, magnanimous and highly intelligent. (35) Nay, he has been instructed all round by the noblest Brahmans skilled in the exposition of Dharma (the principles of righteousness) and the discussion of fiscal matters. Whenever, accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa, he sets out on an expedition in the interests of a village or a city he never returns without scoring a victory once he is out. Returning from an encounter on the back of an elephant or in a chariot, he always lovingly inquires of the citizens (of Ayodhya) in their totality according to their order of seniority about their welfare concerning sons, sacrificial fires, wife, servants and groups of pupils as of his own kindred or as a father would inquire of sons sprung from his own loins. Nay, Śrī Rāma, a tiger among men, every now and then says to us (Brahmans), "Do your pupils serve you ?" and to the Kṣatriyas, "Do your bodyguards, protected with an armour, wait upon you ?"

व्यसनेषु मनुष्याणां भृशं भवति दुःखितः ॥४०॥
उत्सवेषु च सर्वेषु पितेव परितुष्यति । सत्यवादी महेष्वासो वृद्धसेवी जितेन्द्रियः ॥४१॥
स्मितपूर्वाभिभाषी च धर्मं सर्वात्मनाश्रितः । सम्यग्योक्ता श्रेयसां च न विगृह्यकथारुचिः ॥४२॥
उत्तरोत्तरयुक्तौ च वक्ता वाचस्पतिर्यथा । सुभ्रूरायतताम्राक्षः साक्षाद् विष्णुरिव स्वयम् ॥४३॥
रामो लोकाभिरामोऽयं शौर्यवीर्यपराक्रमैः । प्रजापालनसंयुक्तो न रागोपहतेन्द्रियः ॥४४॥
शक्तस्त्रैलोक्यमप्येष भोक्तुं किं नु महीमिमाम् । नास्य क्रोधः प्रसादश्च निरर्थोऽस्ति कदाचन ॥४५॥
हन्त्येष नियमाद् वध्यानवध्येषु न कुप्यति । युनक्त्यर्थैः प्रहृष्टश्च तमसौ यत्र तुष्यति ॥४६॥
दान्तैः सर्वप्रजाकान्तैः प्रीतिसंजननैर्नृणाम् । गुणैर्विरोचते रामो दीप्तः सूर्य इवांशुभिः ॥४७॥

"He feels sore distressed when he finds men in straits and rejoices like a father in all their jubilations. He (always) utters the truth, wields a mighty bow, serves his elders and has his mind under control. (36—41) He prefaces his speech with a smile and has embraced righteousness with all his being. He duly accomplishes beneficent deeds and never relishes arguments carried on in a controversial spirit. Nay, he is a debater of Bṛhaspati's rank in the field of argument and counter-argument (carried on in a friendly spirit for arriving at the truth). With shapely brows and large ruddy eyes he appears like Lord Viṣṇu Himself in human semblance. (42-43) The aforesaid Śrī Rāma delights the world by his intrepidity, valour and might. Although he remains assiduously engaged in protecting the people, his mind is never blinded by passion. (44) He is capable of ruling even the three worlds (*viz*, heaven, earth and the intermediate region), to say nothing of this earth. His frown and favour are never purposeless. (45) He kills those deserving death according to the scriptural ordinance and is never angry with those who do not deserve to be killed. Nay, greatly rejoiced, he endows with riches the man with whom he gets pleased. (6) Like the sun irradiated by its rays, Śrī Rāma shines brightly by virtue of his excellences characterized by self-control, loved by all created beings and affording delight to men. (47)

---

* शिक्षा व्याकरणं छन्दो निरुक्तं ज्यौतिषं तथा । कल्पश्चेति व्याहृतानि वेदाङ्गानि मनीषिभिः ॥

तमेवंगुणसम्पन्नं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् । लोकपालोपमं नाथमकामयत मेदिनी ॥४८॥
वत्सः श्रेयसि जातस्ते दिष्ट्यासौ तव राघवः । दिष्ट्या पुत्रगुणैर्युक्तो मारीच इव कश्यपः ॥४९॥
बलमारोग्यमायुश्च रामस्य विदितात्मनः । देवासुरमनुष्येषु सगन्धर्वोरगेषु च ॥५०॥
आशंसते जनः सर्वो राष्ट्रे पुरवरे तथा । आभ्यन्तरश्च बाह्यश्च पौरजानपदो जनः ॥५१॥
स्त्रियो वृद्धास्तरुण्यश्च सायं प्रातः समाहिताः ।
सर्वा देवान् नमस्यन्ति रामस्यार्थे मनस्विनः । तेषां तद् याचितं देव त्वत्प्रसादात् समृद्ध्यताम् ॥५२॥
राममिन्दीवरश्यामं सर्वशत्रुनिबर्हणम् । पश्यामो यौवराज्यस्थं तव राजोत्तमात्मजम् ॥५३॥
तं देवदेवोपममात्मजं ते सर्वस्य लोकस्य हिते निविष्टम् ।
हिताय नः क्षिप्रमुदारजुष्टं मुदाभिषेक्तुं वरद त्वमर्हसि ॥५४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्वितीयः सर्गः ॥ २ ॥

Earth seeks to have as its master the aforesaid Śrī Rāma of unfailing might, and vying with the guardians of the spheres, endowed as he is with the above-noted virtues. (48) Fortunately (for us) your aforesaid son has grown capable of doing good (to the world at large) and, like Kaśyapa, son of Marīchi (one of the nine mind-born sons of Brahmā, the creator), Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) is luckily enough endowed with (all) filial* virtues. (49) Everyone among gods, demons and men, including Gandharvas (celestial musicians) and Nāgas (a class of semi-divine beings, having the face of a human being and the tail of a serpent) as also in the state (of Kosala) as well as in the capital town (of Ayodhya), nay, everyone belonging to the gynaeceum and forming part of the urban and rural population outside the state prays for the strength, health and longevity of Śrī Rāma of well-known amiability. (50-51) (Both) morning and evening (as well as at midday) all women, old as well as young, devoutly bow to the gods in the interest of the lofty-minded Śrī Rāma. Let that entreaty of theirs be fulfilled by your grace, O lord ! (52) We would see installed in the office of Prince Regent your (eldest) son, Śrī Rāma, cerulean as a blue lotus, the destroyer of all enemies, O jewel among kings ! (53) In our interest, O bestower of boons, you ought delightfully to install as Prince Regent without delay your aforesaid son (Śrī Rāma), a compeer of Lord Viṣṇu (the adored of gods), intent (as he is) upon doing good to the entire universe and is resorted to by the great. (54)

Thus ends Çanto Two in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Valmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

---

* According to Sanskrit etymology, that son (Puttra) alone is really worth the name, who is capable of redeeming his father from the hell going by the name of 'Put' (into which those who die without leaving a male son are said to fall) by offering water to his departed soul after death :—
पुन्नाम्नो नरकात्त्रायते इति पुत्त्रः ।

तृतीयः सर्गः

Canto III

Urged by the emperor to solemnize the installation of Śrī Rāma as Prince Regent, Vasiṣṭha enjoins in his turn Dasaratha's ministers, Sumantra and others, to get ready all requisites for the ceremony. Sent by Sumantra, Śrī Rāma in the meantime calls on his father, who announces his decision to install him as Prince Regent and also tenders some opportune advice to him. Śrī Rāma's chums break the news to Śrī Rāma's mother, Kausalyā; and, treasuring in his mind the exhortation of his father and bowing low to him, Śrī Rāma returns to his own apartments.

तेषामञ्जलिपद्मानि प्रगृहीतानि सर्वशः । प्रतिगृह्याब्रवीद् राजा तेभ्यः प्रियहितं वचः ॥ १ ॥
अहोऽस्मि परमप्रीतः प्रभावश्चातुलो मम । यन्मे ज्येष्ठं प्रियं पुत्रं यौवराज्यस्थमिच्छथ ॥ २ ॥
इति प्रत्यर्चितान् राजा ब्राह्मणानिदमब्रवीत् । वसिष्ठं वामदेवं च तेषामेवोपशृण्वताम् ॥ ३ ॥
चैत्रः श्रीमानयं मासः पुण्यः पुष्पितकाननः । यौवराज्याय रामस्य सर्वमेवोपकल्प्यताम् ॥ ४ ॥
राज्ञस्तूपरते वाक्ये जनघोषो महानभूत् । शनैस्तस्मिन् प्रशान्ते च जनघोषे जनाधिपः ॥ ५ ॥
वसिष्ठं मुनिशार्दूलं राजा वचनमब्रवीत् । अभिषेकाय रामस्य यत् कर्म सपरिच्छदम् ॥ ६ ॥
तदद्य भगवन् सर्वमाज्ञापयितुमर्हसि ।

Answering the salutations of them all (in the form of the hollow of their palms joined together in the shape of a lotus bud and placed on their forehead), the emperor (Daśaratha) addressed to them the following agreeable and well-meaning reply :—(1) "Ah, I feel supremely pleased and incomparable is my fortune in that you (all) desire my eldest and pet son (Śrī Rāma) to be installed in the office of Prince Regent." (2) Having thus returned the honour done by them (the citizens of Ayodhya and the people hailing from the country side), the emperor spoke as follows to Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva and other Brahmans within the very hearing of the former (the people of Ayodhya and the country-side) :—(3) "The present is the splendid and sacred month of Chaitra (roughly corresponding to March of the Gregorian calendar), when the woodlands are adorned with blossoms (as a mark of rejoicing). Let everything indeed be got ready for the installation of Śrī Rāma in the office of Prince Regent." (4) The emperor's statement having ended, there actually issued forth a loud clamour from men. And that clamour of men having died out by degrees, Daśaratha, a ruler of men, addressed the following words to Sage Vasiṣṭha, a (veritable) tiger among hermits (as also to Vāmadeva) : "Be pleased, O venerable sir, to enjoin all the traditional ceremonial which is required (according to the Śāstras) for the installation of Śrī Rāma (as Prince Regent), along with the accessories (that will be required for conducting the ceremonial)."

तच्छ्रुत्वा भूमिपालस्य वसिष्ठो मुनिसत्तमः ॥ ७ ॥
आदिदेशाग्रतो राज्ञः स्थितान् युक्तान् कृताञ्जलीन् । सुवर्णादीनि रत्नानि बलीन् सर्वौषधीरपि ॥ ८ ॥
शुक्लमाल्यानि लाजांश्च पृथक् च मधुसर्पिषी । अहतानि च वासांसि रथं सर्वायुधान्यपि ॥ ९ ॥
चतुरङ्गबलं चैव गजं च शुभलक्षणम् । चामरव्यजने चोभे ध्वजं छत्रं च पाण्डुरम् ॥१०॥
शतं च शातकुम्भानां कुम्भानामग्निवर्चसाम् । हिरण्यशृङ्गमृषभं समग्रं व्याघ्रचर्म च ॥११॥
यच्चान्यत् किंचिदेष्टव्यं तत् सर्वमुपकल्प्यताम् । उपस्थापयत प्रातरग्न्यगारे महीपतेः ॥१२॥
अन्तःपुरस्य द्वाराणि सर्वस्य नगरस्य च । चन्दनस्रग्भिरर्च्यन्तां धूपैश्च घ्राणहारिभिः ॥१३॥
प्रशस्तमन्नं गुणवद् दधिक्षीरोपसेचनम् । द्विजानां शतसाहस्रं यत्प्रकाममलं भवेत् ॥१४॥
सत्कृत्य द्विजमुख्यानां श्वः प्रभाते प्रदीयताम् । घृतं दधि च लाजाश्च दक्षिणाश्चापि पुष्कलाः ॥१५॥

Hearing the aforesaid submission of Daśaratha (the ruler of the earth), Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of sages, commanded the ministers (Sumantra and others) authorized (in this behalf), who stood with joined palms in front of the emperor:—"(Please) get ready gold and other precious substances, oblations (to be offered to the gods) as well as all the medicinal herbs (essential for the installation ceremony), white flowers and parched grains of paddy as also honey and ghee kept apart, nay, pieces of brand new (*lit.*, unbeaten) cloth, a chariot as also all kinds of weapons as well as the army consisting of all its four limbs (*viz*, the horse, elephants, chariots and infantry), again, an elephant endowed with auspicious bodily marks, a pair each of whisks made of a yak's tail and fans both, a flag and a white umbrella nay, a hundred gold pitchers effulgent as fire, a bull with gold-plated horns and a whole lion-skin (with nails etc. intact) and everything else (such as sandal-paste) that may be desirable. Keep all these requisites ready next morning at or about the royal fire-sanctuary. (5—12) Let the gates and doorways of the gynaeceum as well as of the whole city be decorated with sandal-paste and garlands as well as with fumes of incense ravishing the olfactory sense. (13) Let excellent and wholesome rice cooked in milk or curds that may fully suffice for a lakh of Brahmans, as well as ghee, curds and parched grains of paddy be served up with respect and Dakṣiṇās (monetary gifts at the end of a dinner) on a liberal scale given to the foremost of Brahmans tomorrow morning. (14-15)

सूर्येऽभ्युदितमात्रे श्वो भविता स्वस्तिवाचनम् । ब्राह्मणाश्च निमन्त्र्यन्तां कल्प्यन्तामासनानि च ॥१६॥
आबध्यन्तां पताकाश्च राजमार्गश्च सिच्यताम् । सर्वे च तालावचरा गणिकाश्च स्वलंकृताः ॥१७॥
कक्ष्यां द्वितीयामासाद्य तिष्ठन्तु नृपवेश्मनः । देवायतनचैत्येषु सान्नभक्ष्याः सदक्षिणाः ॥१८॥
उपस्थापयितव्याः स्युर्माल्ययोग्याः पृथक् पृथक् । दीर्घासिबद्धगोधाश्च संनद्धा मृष्टवाससः ॥१९॥
महाराजाङ्गनं शूराः प्रविशन्तु महोदयम् । एवं व्यादिश्य विप्रौ तु क्रियास्तत्र विनिष्ठितौ ॥२०॥
चक्रतुश्चैव यच्छेषं पार्थिवाय निवेद्य च । कृतमित्येव चाब्रूतामभिगम्य जगत्पतिम् ॥२१॥
यथोक्तवचनं प्रीतौ हर्षयुक्तौ द्विजोत्तमौ । ततः सुमन्त्रं द्युतिमान् राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥२२॥
रामः कृतात्मा भवता शीघ्रमानीयतामिति । स तथेति प्रतिज्ञाय सुमन्त्रो राजशासनात् ॥२३॥
रामं तत्रानयांचक्रे रथेन रथिनां वरम् ।

"As soon as the sun rises tomorrow there will be Swasti-Vāchana (a religious rite preparatory to any religious or solemn observance, in which blessings are invoked on the individual to be consecrated for the observance) and let

Brahmans be invited (for the purpose) and seats provided (for them). (16) Nay, let buntings be strung (everywhere) and let the main road be sprinkled with water (to prevent dust being raised by the traffic). Again, reaching the second enclosure of the king's palace (the first one being selected for the installation ceremony and therefore exclusively occupied by the Brahmans) let the male dancers and the dancing girls, beautifully adorned, wait there (to discharge their duty when asked to do so). Let the images of deities deserving worship through flowers and installed in temples and at cross-roads be worshipped severally and served with cooked rice and (other) dishes requiring mastication and offered presents in the shape of money (too). Let armoured warriors armed with a long sword and wearing gloves of iguana skin and clad in a clean uniform enter the emperor's courtyard full of great jubilation." Having enjoined as aforesaid the rites to be performed (for the occasion), the two Brahmans (Vasiṣṭha and Vāmadeva) personally did what (yet) remained to be done, while keeping seated there, after making it known to the king of course. Nay, approaching with a delighted mind Daśaratha (the ruler of the world), Vasiṣṭha and Vāmadeva (the foremost of Brahmans), full of joy (in their expression), informed him that everything had been done as enjoined. The glorious emperor then spoke to Sumantra as follows:—"Let Rāma of disciplined mind be speedily brought by you (in my presence)." Saying in reply "Amen!" Sumantra brought Śrī Rāma, the foremost of car-warriors, in a chariot under the emperor's order to the council chamber.

अथ तत्र समासीनास्तदा दशरथं नृपम् ॥२४॥
प्राच्योदीच्याः प्रतीच्याश्च दाक्षिणात्याश्च भूमिपाः । म्लेच्छाश्चार्याश्च ये चान्ये वनशैलान्तवासिनः ॥२५॥
उपासांचक्रिरे सर्वे तं देवा वासवं यथा । तेषां मध्ये स राजर्षिर्मरुतामिव वासवः ॥२६॥
प्रासादस्थो दशरथो ददर्शायान्तमात्मजम् । गन्धर्वराजप्रतिमं लोके विख्यातपौरुषम् ॥२७॥
दीर्घबाहुं महासत्त्वं मत्तमातङ्गगामिनम् । चन्द्रकान्ताननं राममतीव प्रियदर्शनम् ॥२८॥
रूपौदार्यगुणैः पुंसां दृष्टिचित्तापहारिणम् । घर्माभितप्ताः पर्जन्यं ह्लादयन्तमिव प्रजाः ॥२९॥
न ततर्प समायान्तं पश्यमानो नराधिपः । अवतार्य सुमन्त्रस्तु राघवं स्यन्दनोत्तमात् ॥३०॥
पितुः समीपं गच्छन्तं प्राञ्जलिः पृष्ठतोऽन्वगात् । स तं कैलासशृङ्गाभं प्रासादं नरपुंगवः ॥३१॥
आरुरोह नृपं द्रष्टुं सहसा तेन राघवः । स प्राञ्जलिरभिप्रेत्य प्रणतः पितुरन्तिके ॥३२॥
नाम स्वं श्रावयन् रामो ववन्दे चरणौ पितुः ।

The kings belonging to (all the four quarters *viz.*) east, north, west and south, Mlechchas (non-Aryans) as well as Aryans and others living on the verge of a mountain and in the precincts of a forest, who were comfortably seated there on that occasion, all now danced attendance upon the aforesaid Emperor Daśaratha as gods wait upon Indra (the ruler of gods). Seated in his palace in their midst as Indra in the midst of gods, Daśaratha saw, coming towards him, his (eldest) son, Śrī Rāma, who vied with the ruler of Gandharvas (in comeliness of form etc.), whose prowess was widely known in the universe, who was endowed with (unusually) long arms and possessed of great might, who walked like an elephant in rut, whose face was lovelier than the moon, (nay) who had a most pleasing aspect, who attracted the eyes and mind of men by his comeliness of form, liberality and other virtues and who delighted the people (even) as a cloud delights those scorched by sunshine. (17—29) Daśaratha (a ruler of men) did not feel sated as he saw him coming in a befitting manner. Helping Śrī Rāma to alight from his excellent chariot, Sumantra for his part followed with joined palms at his heels (even) as he walked into the presence of his father (Emperor Daśaratha). In order to see the emperor the aforesaid Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the foremost of men, went up along with Sumantra straight to the well-known palace, which looked like the peak of Mount Kailāsa (because of its white colour). Making his way with joined palms to the presence of his father and falling prostrate*, the celebrated Śrī Rāma bowed at the latter's feet, mentioning his own name.

तं दृष्ट्वा प्रणतं पार्श्वे कृताञ्जलिपुटं नृपः ॥३३॥
गृह्याञ्जलौ समाकृष्य सस्वजे प्रियमात्मजम् । तस्मै चाभ्युद्यतं सम्यङ्मणिकाञ्चनभूषितम् ॥३४॥
दिदेश राजा रुचिरं रामाय परमासनम् । तथाऽऽसनवरं प्राप्य व्यदीपयत राघवः ॥३५॥
स्वयैव प्रभया मेरुमुदये विमलो रविः । तेन विभ्राजिता तत्र सा सभापि व्यरोचत ॥३६॥
विमलग्रहनक्षत्रा शारदी द्यौरिवेन्दुना । तं पश्यमानो नृपतिस्तुतोष प्रियमात्मजम् ॥३७॥
अलंकृतमिवात्मानमादर्शतलसंस्थितम् । स तं सुस्थितमाभाष्य पुत्रं पुत्रवतां वरः ॥३८॥
उवाचेदं वचो राजा देवेन्द्रमिव कश्यपः । ज्येष्ठायामसि मे पत्न्यां सदृश्यां सदृशः सुतः ॥३९॥
उत्पन्नस्त्वं गुणज्येष्ठो मम रामात्मजः प्रियः । त्वया यतः प्रजाश्चेमाः स्वगुणैरनुरञ्जिताः ॥४०॥
तस्मात् त्वं पुष्ययोगेन यौवराज्यमवाप्नुहि । कामतस्त्वं प्रकृत्यैव निर्णीतो गुणवानिति ॥४१॥

Seeing him lying prostrate by his side with joined palms, the king (*lit.*, a ruler of men) took him by his joined palms and, drawing him near, hugged his beloved son. Nay, the emperor offered to the said Śrī Rāma a splendid and excellent seat, beautifully inlaid with gems and gold and (already) kept ready (by his servants). Mounting the princely seat, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) illumined it by his own effulgence in the same way as the clear sun would illumine Mount Meru at dawn. Illumined by him, that assembly too shone brightly on that occasion (even) as the autumnal sky, spangled with bright planets and stars, would shine (all the more) brightly when illumined by the moon. The emperor rejoiced to see his beloved son (even) as one would rejoice to see oneself, decked with ornaments, reflected on the surface of a mirror. Addressing his aforesaid son, comfortably seated, Daśaratha, the foremost of those blessed with a son, spoke as follows (even) as Sage Kaśyapa would address (his eldest son) Indra (the ruler of gods):—You have been born of my seniormost wife (Kausalyā), (who is) worthy of me (in every wise), as a son (equally) worthy of myself. Being seniormost in virtues (as well), O Rāma, you are my pet son. Since (all) these people (assembled here) have been gratified by you through your excellences, therefore accept you the office of Prince Regent tomorrow (when the moon appears in conjunction with the constellation Puṣya). You have been adjudged to be abundantly rich in excellences by your very disposition. (30—41)

---

* In the Smṛti texts it is laid down that, calling on one's father or teacher every day, one should bow to him lying prostrate on the ground—'दण्डवत् प्रणमेद् भूमावुपेत्य गुरुमन्वहम् ।'

गुणवत्यपि तु स्नेहात् पुत्र वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् । भूयो विनयमास्थाय भव नित्यं जितेन्द्रियः ॥४२॥
कामक्रोधसमुत्थानि त्यजस्व व्यसनानि च । परोक्षया वर्तमानो वृत्त्या प्रत्यक्षया तथा ॥४३॥
अमात्यप्रभृतीः सर्वाः प्रजाश्चैवानुरञ्जय । कोष्ठागारायुधागारैः कृत्वा संनिचयान् बहून् ॥४४॥
इष्टानुरक्तप्रकृतिर्यः पालयति मेदिनीम् । तस्य नन्दन्ति मित्राणि लब्ध्वामृतमिवामराः ॥४५॥
तस्मात् पुत्र त्वमात्मानं नियम्यैवं समाचर । तच्छ्रुत्वा सुहृदस्तस्य रामस्य प्रियकारिणः ॥४६॥
त्वरिताः शीघ्रमागत्य कौसल्यायै न्यवेदयन् । सा हिरण्यं च गाश्चैव रत्नानि विविधानि च ॥४७॥
व्यादिदेश प्रियाख्येभ्यः कौसल्या प्रमदोत्तमा ।
अथाभिवाद्य राजानं रथमारुह्य राघवः । ययौ स्वं द्युतिमद् वेश्म जनौघैः प्रतिपूजितः ॥४८॥
ते चापि पौरा नृपतेर्वचस्तच्छ्रुत्वा तदा लाभमिवेष्टमाशु ।
नरेन्द्रमामन्त्र्य गृहाणि गत्वा देवान् समानर्चुरभिप्रहृष्टाः ॥४९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे तृतीयः सर्गः ॥ ३ ॥

"To you, a storehouse of merits as you are, I shall tender friendly advice, my son, (as follows) out of sheer affection. Resorting to (even) greater humility (than before), constantly keep your senses under control and eschew vices* born of concupiscence and anger. Ruling according (both) to the indirect† and direct methods (of governance), please your ministers and others (namely, the army commanders and civic guards) as well as all the people, laying by (against future contingencies) numerous stores (of useful materials such as jewellery, gold and silver, textiles and ornaments) along with barns and armouries. (42—44) The friends and allies of a monarch who protects the earth (with fostering care) and whose subjects are not only loved by him (as his children) but are devoted to him (in their turn) exult (in the same way) as the immortals did on securing nectar. (45) Disciplining your mind, therefore, my son, conduct yourself well as instructed (by me)." Hearing this and hastening to mother Kausalyā, the chums of Śrī Rāma hastily reported the matter to her, intent as they were on obliging him. The said Kausalyā, the foremost of women, bestowed gold as well as cows and jewels of various kinds on those who broke the delightful news

---

* The vices born of lust and anger have been separately enumerated as below :—

मृगयाक्षो दिवास्वापः परिवादः स्त्रियो मदः । तौर्यत्रिकं वृथाट्यं च कामजो दशको गणः ॥
(Manu., VII. 47)

"Hunting, playing at dice, sleeping by day, slandering others, fondness for women, vanity, love of singing, playing on musical instruments and dancing, and strolling about idly—these are the ten vices born of lust."

पैशुन्यं साहसं द्रोह ईर्ष्यासूयार्थदूषणम् । वाग्दण्डयोश्च पारुष्यं क्रोधजोऽपि गणोऽष्टकः ॥
(Manu., VII. 48)

"Talebearing, violence, vindictiveness, jealousy, censoriousness and squandering one's patrimony, abusive speech and cruelty in punishment are the eight vices born of anger."

† Ascertaining the condition and loyalty of one's own people and the relative strength and intentions etc. of neighbouring states through a network of spies is what has been spoken of here as the indirect method of rule; to make a tour of one's dominions and ascertain things personally, to invite direct petitions from one's subjects, hear their grievances and decide their cases on their own merits is what has been designated as the direct method of governance.

(to her). Then, bowing to the emperor and mounting the chariot, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) retired to his splendid palace, greeted (on the way) by multitudes of men. (46—48) Immensely delighted to hear the said announcement of the king, (even) as one would feel on being promised a coveted boon, and taking leave of the emperor, the aforesaid citizens too speedily returned to their (respective) dwellings and duly worshipped the gods (in order that Śrī Rāma's installation may be concluded without any let or hindrance). (49)

Thus ends Canto Three in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुर्थः सर्गः

Canto IV

Apprehending obstruction of Śrī Rāma's installation from an ominous dream, Daśaratha summons Śrī Rāma immediately and asks him to observe certain sacred vows preliminary to installation along with Sītā. Dismissed by his father, he enters his mother's gynaeceum and, after receiving her blessings, retires along with Sītā, already present there, to his own palace.

गतेष्वथ नृपो भूयः पौरेषु सह मन्त्रिभिः । मन्त्रयित्वा ततश्चक्रे निश्चयज्ञः स निश्चयम् ॥ १ ॥
श्व एव पुष्यो भविता श्वोऽभिषेच्यस्तु मे सुतः । रामो राजीवपत्राक्षो युवराज इति प्रभुः ॥ २ ॥
अथान्तर्गृहमाविश्य राजा दशरथस्तदा । सूतमामन्त्रयामास रामं पुनरिहानय ॥ ३ ॥
प्रतिगृह्य तु तद्वाक्यं सूतः पुनरुपाययौ । रामस्य भवनं शीघ्रं राममानयितुं पुनः ॥ ४ ॥
द्वाःस्थैरावेदितं तस्य रामायागमनं पुनः । श्रुत्वैव चापि रामस्तं प्राप्तं शङ्कान्वितोऽभवत् ॥ ५ ॥
प्रवेश्य चैनं त्वरितो रामो वचनमब्रवीत् । यदागमनकृत्यं ते भूयस्तद् ब्रूह्यशेषतः ॥ ६ ॥
तमुवाच ततः सूतो राजा त्वां द्रष्टुमिच्छति । श्रुत्वा प्रमाणं तत्र त्वं गमनायेतराय वा ॥ ७ ॥
इति सूतवचः श्रुत्वा रामोऽपि त्वरयान्वितः । प्रययौ राजभवनं पुनर्द्रष्टुं नरेश्वरम् ॥ ८ ॥

Conferring with his counsellors once more, the citizens having dispersed, the celebrated and powerful monarch (Daśaratha), who knew the rules regarding the time and place of a ceremony, thereupon at once arrived at the decision that since the constellation Puṣya was going to be in the ascendant the day immediately following, his (eldest) son, Śrī Rāma, whose eyes resembled the petals of a lotus, needs must be installed as Prince Regent the very next day. (1-2) Entering the inner apartments immediately afterwards, King Daśaratha then said to Sumantra, "Get Rāma here once more." (3) Bowing to his command, Sumantra (the charioteer-minister) for his part hastened to Śrī Rāma's palace once more in order to bring him again (to the emperor's presence). (4) His renewed call was reported to Śrī Rāma by the porters and Śrī Rāma too was filled with apprehension the moment he heard that Sumantra had arrived (for the second time). (5) Hastily calling him in, Śrī Rāma spoke to him as follows :—("Please) state unreservedly that which is sought to be achieved through your second visit?" (6) Sumantra (the charioteer-minister) then submitted to him, "The emperor desires to see you. Hearing my submission it is for you to decide whether you should proceed to your father or do otherwise." (7) Hearing the aforesaid message delivered by Sumantra (the charioteer-minister) Śrī Rāma for his part hastily called at the royal palace in order to see the emperor once more. (8)

तं श्रुत्वा समनुप्राप्तं रामं दशरथो नृपः । प्रवेशयामास गृहं विवक्षुः प्रियमुत्तमम् ॥९॥
प्रविशन्नेव च श्रीमान् राघवो भवनं पितुः । ददर्श पितरं दूरात् प्रणिपत्य कृताञ्जलिः ॥१०॥
प्रणमन्तं तमुत्थाप्य सम्परिष्वज्य भूमिपः । प्रदिश्य चासनं चास्मै रामं च पुनरब्रवीत् ॥११॥
राम वृद्धोऽस्मि दीर्घायुर्भुक्ता भोगा यथेप्सिताः । अन्नवद्भिः क्रतुशतैर्यथेष्टं भूरिदक्षिणैः ॥१२॥
जातमिष्टमपत्यं मे त्वमद्यानुपमं भुवि । दत्तमिष्टमधीतं च मया पुरुषसत्तम ॥१३॥
अनुभूतानि चेष्टानि मया वीर सुखान्यपि । देवर्षिपितृविप्राणामनृणोऽस्मि तथाऽऽत्मनः ॥१४॥

Hearing that Śrī Rāma had duly arrived, Emperor Daśaratha bade him enter his chamber, keen as he was to announce something most valuable and agreeable. (9) Falling prostrate with his palms joined together (as a token of submission), the moment he entered his father's chamber, the glorious Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) saw his father from a distance. (10) Lifting him up, (even) while he was lying prostrate, nay, pressing him closely to his bosom and offering him a seat, the emperor spoke to Śrī Rāma again (as follows) :—(11) "Having lived a long life I have (now) grown old; (nay) luxuries have been enjoyed (by me) as desired and God has been propitiated (by me) with due ceremony through hundreds of sacrificial performances (ranging from Jyotiṣṭoma to Aśwamedha) accompanied by (large) gifts of foodgrains and liberal fees (paid to the officiating priests). (12) A son (of the type) desired by me and having no compeer on earth today has been born to me in your person. Gifts of the desired type have been given and the Vedas etc. studied by me, O jewel among men ! (13) (Sense-) delights sought by me have also been enjoyed (by me), O gallant one ! (In this way) I have repaid my debt to gods (through sacrificial performances), to Ṛṣis (through a study of the Vedas), to manes (through procreation) and to the Brahmans (by bestowing gifts on them) as well as to myself (through enjoyment of sense-delights). (14)

न किंचिन्मम कर्तव्यं तवान्यत्राभिषेचनात् । अतो यत्त्वामहं ब्रूयां तन्मे त्वं कर्तुमर्हसि ॥१५॥
अद्य प्रकृतयः सर्वास्त्वामिच्छन्ति नराधिपम् । अतस्त्वां युवराजानमभिषेक्ष्यामि पुत्रक ॥१६॥
अपि चाद्याशुभान् राम स्वप्नान् पश्यामि राघव । सनिर्घाता दिवोल्काश्च पतन्ति हि महास्वनाः ॥१७॥
अवष्टब्धं च मे राम नक्षत्रं दारुणग्रहैः । आवेदयन्ति दैवज्ञाः सूर्याङ्गारकराहुभिः ॥१८॥
प्रायेण च निमित्तानामीदृशानां समुद्भवे । राजा हि मृत्युमाप्नोति घोरां चापदमृच्छति ॥१९॥
तद् यावदेव मे चेतो न विमुह्यति राघव । तावदेवाभिषिञ्चस्व चला हि प्राणिनां मतिः ॥२०॥
अद्य चन्द्रोऽभ्युपगमत् पुष्यात् पूर्वं पुनर्वसुम् । श्वः पुष्ययोगं नियतं वक्ष्यन्ते दैवचिन्तकाः ॥२१॥
तत्र पुष्येऽभिषिञ्चस्व मनस्त्वरयतीव माम् । श्वस्त्वाहमभिषेक्ष्यामि यौवराज्ये परंतप ॥२२॥

Nothing else than installing you (as Prince Regent) remains to be accomplished by me. Hence you ought to do for my sake what I ask you (to do). (15) All the people would have you as their sovereign now ; hence I shall install you as Prince Regent, my dear son ! (16) Further I see these days ominous dreams, O Rāma !

Nay, meteors accompanied by thunderbolts (bereft of clouds) and attended with great noise fall by day, O scion of Raghu ! (17) Astrologers declare that the asterism under which I was born is under the influence of unpropitious planets, *viz*, the Sun, Mars and Rāhu. (18) On the appearance of such (evil) portents a monarch surely suffers a terrible calamity and (ultimately) meets his end. (19) Therefore, so long as my mind does not get perverted (as a result of pleading to the contrary from any other quarter), be installed; for fickle is the judgment of human beings. (20) The moon has reached today the sphere of influence of Punarvasu, the asterism preceding Puṣya. Tomorrow, the astrologers declare, will take place the positive conjunction of the moon with Puṣya. (21) Be installed when the said Puṣya is in the ascendant; my mind is urging me as it were to expedite things. I shall (positively) install you in the office of Prince Regent tomorrow, O chastiser of enemies ! (22)

तस्मात् त्वयाद्यप्रभृति निशेयं नियतात्मना । सह वध्वोपवस्तव्या दर्भप्रस्तरशायिना ॥२३॥
सुहृदश्चाप्रमत्तास्त्वां रक्षन्त्वद्य समन्ततः । भवन्ति बहुविघ्नानि कार्याण्येवंविधानि हि ॥२४॥
विप्रोषितश्च भरतो यावदेव पुरादितः । तावदेवाभिषेकस्ते प्राप्तकालो मतो मम ॥२५॥
कामं खलु सतां वृत्ते भ्राता ते भरतः स्थितः । ज्येष्ठानुवर्ती धर्मात्मा सानुक्रोशो जितेन्द्रियः ॥२६॥
किं नु चित्तं मनुष्याणामनित्यमिति मे मतम् । सतां च धर्मनित्यानां कृतशोभि च राघव ॥२७॥
इत्युक्तः सोऽभ्यनुज्ञातः श्वोभाविन्यभिषेचने । व्रजेति रामः पितरमभिवाद्याभ्ययाद् गृहम् ॥२८॥
प्रविश्य चात्मनो वेश्म राज्ञाऽऽदिष्टेऽभिषेचने । तत्क्षणादेव निष्क्रम्य मातुरन्तःपुरं ययौ ॥२९॥
तत्र तां प्रवणामेव मातरं क्षौमवासिनीम् । वाग्यतां देवतागारे ददर्शायाचतीं श्रियम् ॥३०॥

"Therefore from this moment on a fast should be observed by you with your spouse for the night, keeping your mind and body fully controlled and sleeping on (a mat of) Darbha grass with a slab of stone under your head (for a pillow). (23) Let your friends vigilantly guard you on all sides tonight; for ceremonials of this kind (as your installation in the office of Prince Regent) are hampered by many obstacles. (24) Your installation (as Prince Regent) in my opinion must take place during the very interval when Bharata is away from this city (of Ayodhya).* (25) Although your (half-) brother Bharata scrupulously abides by the conduct of the righteous, is obedient to you (his elder brother), pious of mind and full of compassion and has brought his senses under control, the mind of men nonetheless is inconstant: such is my belief. And the mind of the righteous, who are wedded to piety, rejoices only in action (rather than in speculation), O scion of Raghu !" (26-27) Instructed thus in connection with his installation, which was going to take place the (very) next day, and permitted to leave in the words "Depart (now)", and greeting his father,

---

* In verse 3 of Canto CVII below we find Śrī Rāma telling his younger brother, Bharata, as follows:—

पुरा भ्रातः पिता नः स मातरं ते समुद्वहन् । मातामहे समाश्रौषीद्राज्यशुल्कमनुत्तमम् ॥

"While marrying Kaikeyī (your mother now) in the former days, O brother, our celebrated father (Emperor Daśaratha), promised to your maternal grandfather that as a price of the highest value for the marriage the sovereignty of Ayodhya would descend to the son that might be born of her."

Emperor Daśaratha is apparently referring here to this promise made by him and suspects that Bharata might press his claim for the rulership of Ayodhya if Śrī Rāma were installed as Prince Regent in his presence.

Śrī Rāma withdrew to his palace. (28) Entering his own palace in order to break the news of the installation announced by the emperor (to Sītā), but coming out instantly (on not finding her in her apartments) he moved to his mother's apartments (in the gynaeceum). (29) There he saw in the temple his aforesaid mother clad in silken robes, exclusively devoted to the worship of her chosen deity and silently praying for royal fortune (in favour of Śrī Rāma). (30)

प्रागेव चागता तत्र सुमित्रा लक्ष्मणस्तथा । सीता चानयिता श्रुत्वा प्रियं रामाभिषेचनम् ॥३१॥
तस्मिन् कालेऽपि कौशल्या तस्थावामीलितेक्षणा । सुमित्रयान्वास्यमाना सीतया लक्ष्मणेन च ॥३२॥
श्रुत्वा पुष्ये च पुत्रस्य यौवराज्येऽभिषेचनम् । प्राणायामेन पुरुषं ध्यायमाना जनार्दनम् ॥३३॥
तथा सनियमामेव सोऽभिगम्याभिवाद्य च । उवाच वचनं रामो हर्षयंस्तामिदं वरम् ॥३४॥
अम्ब पित्रा नियुक्तोऽस्मि प्रजापालनकर्मणि । भविता श्वोऽभिषेको मे यथा मे शासनं पितुः ॥३५॥
सीतयाप्युपवस्तव्या रजनीयं मया सह । एवमुक्तमुपाध्यायैः स हि मामुक्तवान् पिता ॥३६॥
यानि यान्यत्र योग्यानि श्वोभाविन्यभिषेचने । तानि मे मङ्गलान्यद्य वैदेह्याश्चैव कारय ॥३७॥
एतच्छ्रुत्वा तु कौसल्या चिरकालाभिकाङ्क्षितम् । हर्षबाष्पाकुलं वाक्यमिदं राममभाषत ॥३८॥

Hearing of Śrī Rāma's welcome installation, Sumitrā too had already arrived there as well as (her son) Lakṣmaṇa; and Sītā (too) had been sent for (there). (31) At that moment too (when Śrī Rāma called on her) Kausalyā remained sitting with her eyes half closed and waited upon by Sumitrā and Lakṣmaṇa, and contemplating with suspended breath on the Supreme Person, Lord Nārāyaṇa (who is solicited by all men), having heard that her son was going to be installed in the office of Prince Regent when the asterism Puṣya was in the ascendant. (32-33) Approaching her even while she was observing her daily routine as aforesaid, and greeting her, Śrī Rāma addressed to her the following excellent submission, bringing joy to her (thereby):—(34) "Mother, I have been entrusted by father with the duty of ruling over the people. My installation will (therefore) take place tomorrow as enjoined by father. A fast is to be kept tonight by Sītā too along with me. Such is the injunction of my teachers (Vasiṣṭha and others) and father too has instructed me accordingly. (35-36) (Please therefore) have all such propitious rites gone through this (very) day as are desirable on this occasion for me as well as for Sītā (a princess of the Videha country) in connection with the installation that is going to take place on the morrow." (37) Hearing of this consummation, which had been coveted for a long time, Kausalyā for her part addressed to Rāma the following reply, which was rendered indistinct by tears of joy:—(38)

वत्स राम चिरं जीव हतास्ते परिपन्थिनः । ज्ञातीन् मे त्वं श्रिया युक्तः सुमित्रायाश्च नन्दय ॥३९॥
कल्याणे बत नक्षत्रे मया जातोऽसि पुत्रक । येन त्वया दशरथो गुणैराराधितः पिता ॥४०॥
अमोघं बत मे क्षान्तं पुरुषे पुष्करेक्षणे । येयमिक्ष्वाकुराजश्रीः पुत्र त्वां संश्रयिष्यति ॥४१॥
इत्येवमुक्तो मात्रा तु रामो भ्रातरमब्रवीत् । प्राञ्जलिं प्रह्वमासीनमभिवीक्ष्य स्मयन्निव ॥४२॥
लक्ष्मणेमां मया सार्धं प्रशाधि त्वं वसुंधराम् । द्वितीयं मेऽन्तरात्मानं त्वामियं श्रीरुपस्थिता ॥४३॥
सौमित्रे भुङ्क्ष्व भोगांस्त्वमिष्टान् राज्यफलानि च । जीवितं चापि राज्यं च त्वदर्थमभिकामये ॥४४॥

इत्युक्त्वा लक्ष्मणं रामो मातरावभिवाद्य च । अभ्यनुज्ञाप्य सीतां च ययौ स्वं च निवेशनम् ॥४५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुर्थः सर्गः ॥ ४ ॥

"Child Rāma, may you live long! Let those inimically disposed to you be wiped off. Invested with royal glory may you bring joy to my relations as well as to those of Sumitrā. (39) I am glad to think, O darling, that you were given birth to by me under a propitious star, thanks to which your father, Emperor Daśaratha, has been propitiated by you by means of your excellences. (40) I am gratified to note that the hardship borne by me (in the shape of austerities and fasting etc.) for the sake of (pleasing) the lotus-eyed Lord Viṣṇu (the Supreme Person) has not gone in vain. It is by virtue of it that the royal fortune enjoyed by the race of Ikṣwāku is going to embrace you." (41) Addressed thus by his mother, Śrī Rāma for his part looked at his (half-) brother (Lakṣmaṇa), who sat bent low (with humility) with joined palms, and spoke to him (as follows) as though smiling:— (42) "Rule you beneficently over this earth with me, O Lakṣmaṇa! This royal fortune has come to you, who are my second life. (43) Enjoy you, O Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), the pleasures coveted by you as well as the rewards of sovereignty (religious merit and fame etc.). I desire to live and even to rule but for you." (44) Having spoken to Lakṣmaṇa as aforesaid and greeting (both) his mothers (Kausalyā and Sumitrā) and having secured leave to depart on behalf of Sītā too, Śrī Rāma retired to his own palace. (45)

Thus ends Canto Four in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

◆

पञ्चमः सर्गः

Canto V

At the instance of the emperor, Vasiṣṭha calls at Śrī Rāma's palace and instructing him along with Sītā to fast for the night, returns to Daśaratha. Permitted by the sage, the emperor adjourns the assembly and retires to the gynaeceum.

संदिश्य रामं नृपतिः श्वोभाविन्यभिषेचने । पुरोहितं समाहूय वसिष्ठमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
गच्छोपवासं काकुत्स्थं कारयाद्य तपोधन । श्रेयसे राज्यलाभाय वध्वा सह यतव्रत ॥ २ ॥
तथेति च स राजानमुक्त्वा वेदविदां वरः । स्वयं वसिष्ठो भगवान् ययौ रामनिवेशनम् ॥ ३ ॥
उपवासयितुं वीरं मन्त्रविन्मन्त्रकोविदम् । ब्राह्मं रथवरं युक्तमास्थाय सुधृतव्रतः ॥ ४ ॥
स रामभवनं प्राप्य पाण्डुराभ्रघनप्रभम् । तिस्रः कक्ष्या रथेनैव विवेश मुनिसत्तमः ॥ ५ ॥
तमागतमृषिं रामस्त्वरन्निव ससम्भ्रमम् । मानयिष्यन् स मानार्हं निश्चक्राम निवेशनात् ॥ ६ ॥
अभ्येत्य त्वरमाणोऽथ रथाभ्याशं मनीषिणः । ततोऽवतारयामास परिगृह्य रथात् स्वयम् ॥ ७ ॥
स चैनं प्रश्रितं दृष्ट्वा सम्भाष्याभिप्रसाद्य च । प्रियार्हं हर्षयन् राममित्युवाच पुरोहितः ॥ ८ ॥

Having instructed Śrī Rāma in connection with his installation fixed for the morrow, and summoning the sage Vasiṣṭha, his family priest, Daśaratha (a ruler of men) spoke to him as follows :— (1) "(Kindly) go and get Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) to observe a fast along with his wife (Sītā) tonight for his welfare (in the shape of removal of obstacles) and for his acquiring sovereignty, O Vasiṣṭha (who are rich in asceticism), firm of resolve (as you yourself are) ! (2) Saying "Amen !" to the emperor and mounting an excellent chariot fit for Brahmans and ready with horses (joined to it), the celebrated and powerful sage Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of those well-versed in the Vedas, and a knower of Mantras (sacred spells), who had firmly kept his vows, personally proceeded to Śrī Rāma's palace in order to ask the hero, a knower of Mantras (himself), to undertake a fast. (3-4) Reaching Śrī Rāma's palace, resplendent like a compact mass of white clouds, Vasiṣṭha (the foremost of ascetics) drove through its three enclosures in the chariot itself. (5) In order to honour the sage arrived (at his door), who deserved (great) respect, Śrī Rāma reverently issued out of his palace in great, hurry. (6) Hastily drawing near the sage's chariot, he forthwith helped him alight from that chariot, personally taking him by the hand. (7) Seeing him bent low (with humility) and inquiring after his welfare and praising him, the aforesaid Vasiṣṭha (his family priest) spoke to Śrī Rāma as follows, bringing joy to him (by his loving words), deserving as he was of kind words :—(8)

प्रसन्नस्ते पिता राम यत्त्वं राज्यमवाप्स्यसि । उपवासं भवानद्य करोतु सह सीतया ॥ ९ ॥
प्रातस्त्वामभिषेक्ता हि यौवराज्ये नराधिपः । पिता दशरथः प्रीत्या ययातिं नहुषो यथा ॥१०॥
इत्युक्त्वा स तदा राममुपवासं यतव्रतः । मन्त्रवत् कारयामास वैदेह्या सहितं शुचिः ॥११॥
ततो यथावद् रामेण स राज्ञो गुरुरर्चितः । अभ्यनुज्ञाप्य काकुत्स्थं ययौ रामनिवेशनात् ॥१२॥
सुहृद्भिस्तत्र रामोऽपि सहासीनः प्रियंवदैः । सभाजितो विवेशाथ ताननुज्ञाप्य सर्वशः ॥१३॥
हृष्टनारीनरयुतं रामवेश्म तदा बभौ । यथा मत्तद्विजगणं प्रफुल्लनलिनं सरः ॥१४॥
स राजभवनप्रख्यात् तस्माद् रामनिवेशनात् । निर्गत्य ददृशे मार्गं वसिष्ठो जनसंवृतम् ॥१५॥
वृन्दवृन्दैरयोध्यायां राजमार्गाः समन्ततः । बभूवुरभिसम्बाधाः कुतूहलजनैर्वृताः ॥१६॥
जनवृन्दोर्मिसंघर्षहर्षस्वनवतस्तदा । बभूव राजमार्गस्य सागरस्येव निःस्वनः ॥१७॥
सिक्तसम्मृष्टरथ्या हि तथा च वनमालिनी । आसीदयोध्या तदहः समुच्छ्रितगृहध्वजा ॥१८॥

"Propitious is your father to you, O Rāma, inasmuch as you are going to attain sovereignty (tomorrow). (Therefore) keep you fast for the night with Sītā. (9) Out of love your father, Emperor Daśaratha, is positively going to install you in the office of Prince Regent next morning, (even) as Nahuṣa installed (his son) Yayāti." (10) Saying so, the holy sage (Vasiṣṭha) of firm resolve enjoined Śrī Rāma along with Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory) to undertake a vow of fasting (for the night) in accordance with sacred texts (prescribing such fasting). (11) Duly worshipped by Śrī Rāma and taking leave of that scion of Kakutstha, Vasiṣṭha (the king's preceptor) then withdrew from Śrī Rāma's palace. (12) Sitting there with his chums, who spoke kindly to him, Śrī Rāma presently took leave of them all and, greeted by them, retired (to his inner apartments). (13) Crowded with joyful men and women, Śrī Rāma's palace at that time looked like a lake swarming with flocks of joyous birds and adorned with full-blown lotuses. (14) Coming out of the aforesaid palace of Śrī Rāma, which vied with the royal palace, Vasiṣṭha found the road thronged with men. (15) Crowded with men full of curiosity (to witness the festivities connected with Śrī Rāma's installation) moving in multitudinous batches, the main roads in all the quarters of Ayodhya became impassable. (16) The noise on the main roads, filled with the hilarious sound produced by the striking of waves in the shape of crowds of men, resembled the roaring of a sea. (17) On that day Ayodhya had all its streets thoroughly swept and sprinkled with (scented) water, overhung with garlands of sylvan flowers and had tall flags hoisted on its house-tops. (18)

तदा ह्ययोध्यानिलयः सस्त्रीबालाकुलो जनः । रामाभिषेकमाकाङ्क्षन्नाकाङ्क्षन्नुदयं रवेः ॥१९॥
प्रजालंकारभूतं च जनस्यानन्दवर्धनम् । उत्सुकोऽभूज्जनो द्रष्टुं तमयोध्यामहोत्सवम् ॥२०॥
एवं तं जनसम्बाधं राजमार्गं पुरोहितः । व्यूहन्निव जनौघं तं शनै राजकुलं ययौ ॥२१॥
सिताभ्रशिखरप्रख्यं प्रासादमधिरुह्य च । समीयाय नरेन्द्रेण शक्रेणेव बृहस्पतिः ॥२२॥
तमागतमभिप्रेक्ष्य हित्वा राजासनं नृपः । पप्रच्छ स्वमतं तस्मै कृतमित्यभिवेदयत् ॥२३॥
तेन चैव तदा तुल्यं सहासीनाः सभासदः । आसनेभ्यः समुत्तस्थुः पूजयन्तः पुरोहितम् ॥२४॥
गुरुणा त्वभ्यनुज्ञातो मनुजौघं विसृज्य तम् । विवेशान्तःपुरं राजा सिंहो गिरिगुहामिव ॥२५॥
तदग्र्यवेषप्रमदाजनाकुलं महेन्द्रवेश्मप्रतिमं निवेशनम् ।
व्यदीपयंश्चारु विवेश पार्थिवः शशीव तारागणसंकुलं नभः ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चमः सर्गः ॥ ५ ॥

Full of flurry the people living in Ayodhya, including women and children, longed for sunrise, eagerly looking forward (as they did) to the installation (as Prince Regent) of Śrī Rāma. (19) Men were eager to witness that grand festival in Ayodhya, which served as an adornment for the people and enhanced their joy (20) In this way Vasiṣṭha (the family priest of Daśaratha) drove slowly to the royal palace, parting asunder as it were the crowd of men that stood blocking the main road (already) crammed with people. (21) Nay, ascending the palace, which resembled the Himalayan range (with its peaks looking like white clouds), he met Daśaratha (a ruler of men) as the sage Bṛhaspati would meet Indra (the ruler of gods). (22) Quitting his royal seat the moment he perceived that he had come, the emperor inquired what was in his mind (*viz*, whether Śrī Rāma had been approached by the sage) and the sage reported to him that what he had been charged with had been accomplished. (23) The councillors too, (who were) sitting by the side of the emperor at that time, duly rose from their seats all at once, showing their honour to the family priest. (24) Proroguing that assembly of men as soon as permitted by his preceptor, the emperor for his part retired to the gynaeceum (even) as a lion would enter a mountain-cave. (25) Daśaratha (the ruler of the earth) entered that charming gynaeceum, crowded with young ladies, clad in excellent robes, and vying with the abode of the mighty Indra (the ruler of gods), illumining it (by his august presence) as the moon would illumine the heavens spangled with a host of stars. (26)

Thus ends Canto Five in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षष्ठः सर्गः

Canto VI

Enjoined by the sage Vasiṣṭha, Śrī Rāma undertakes a vow to bathe early next morning, worship the gods and sleep for the night on a mat of Kuśa grass. On waking up the next morning, he says his Sandhyā prayers and Brahmans wish him a propitious day. The citizens decorate the city in order to give it a festal appearance and it is thronged with men eager to witness the installation of Śrī Rāma as Prince Regent.

गते पुरोहिते रामः स्नातो नियतमानसः । सह पत्न्या विशालाक्ष्या नारायणमुपागमत् ॥ १ ॥
प्रगृह्य शिरसा पात्रीं हविषो विधिवत् ततः । महते दैवतायाज्यं जुहाव ज्वलितानले ॥ २ ॥
शेषं च हविषस्तस्य प्राश्याशास्यात्मनः प्रियम् । ध्यायन्नारायणं देवं स्वास्तीर्णे कुशसंस्तरे ॥ ३ ॥
वाग्यतः सह वैदेह्या भूत्वा नियतमानसः । श्रीमत्यायतने विष्णोः शिश्ये नरवरात्मजः ॥ ४ ॥
एकयामावशिष्टायां रात्र्यां प्रतिविबुध्य सः । अलंकारविधिं सम्यक् कारयामास वेश्मनः ॥ ५ ॥
तत्र शृण्वन् सुखा वाचः सूतमागधवन्दिनाम् । पूर्वां संध्यामुपासीनो जजाप सुसमाहितः ॥ ६ ॥
तुष्टाव प्रणतश्चैव शिरसा मधुसूदनम् । विमलक्षौमसंवीतो वाचयामास स द्विजान् ॥ ७ ॥
तेषां पुण्याहघोषोऽथ गम्भीरमधुरस्तथा । अयोध्यां पूरयामास तूर्यघोषानुनादितः ॥ ८ ॥
कृतोपवासं तु तदा वैदेह्या सह राघवम् । अयोध्यानिलयः श्रुत्वा सर्वः प्रमुदितो जनः ॥ ९ ॥

Having bathed himself, when Vasiṣṭha (the family priest) had left, Śrī Rāma with a concentrated mind worshipped Lord Nārāyaṇa with the co-operation of his wife (Sītā), who had (exceptionally) large eyes. (1) Taking up with his head bent low (in reverence) the vessel containing ghee (for being poured into the sacred fire as oblation), he then consigned the ghee to the lighted fire with due ceremony for the pleasure of Lord Viṣṇu (the Supreme Deity). (2) Tasting the remainder of that offering and expecting (in return) what was dear to him, Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha, the foremost of men) silently lay down to sleep with his mind fully controlled on a mat of Kuśa grass spread by himself in (the hall of) the glorious temple of Lord Viṣṇu* along with Sītā (a princess of the Videha kings) contemplating on Lord Nārāyaṇa. (3-4) Waking up three hours before the close of night, he duly caused the temple hall to be decorated. (5) Hearing there the delightful words of the Sūtas (who recited Purāṇic stories),

---

* The learned commentators point out that the Deity referred to here is no other than Lord Śrī Ranganātha, who had been worshipped by a long line of the rulers of Ayodhya as their chosen deity in a separate shrine built within the precincts of the royal palace. We are told at length in the Pātāla-Khaṇḍa, of the Padma-Purāṇa how Śrī Rāma so kindly handed over the image to Vibhīṣaṇa, through whom it reached Śrīrangam (near Tiruchirapally) in South India, where it exists even to this day and is held in the highest reverence by the Vaiṣṇavas and other devotees all over India.

Māgadhas (who regularly recorded and recounted on festive occasions the genealogy of the families of their patrons) and Vandīs (panegyrists) and saying his Sandhyā prayers for the morning (in which the deity presiding over the morning twilight is invoked and prayed to), he repeated the Gāyatrī Mantra with a fully concentrated mind. (6) Clad in immaculate silk he glorified Lord Viṣṇu (the Destroyer of the demon Madhu) and saluted Him with his head bent low and urged the Brahmans to recite benedictory Mantras (Swasti-Vāchana) and Mantras wishing him a propitious day (Puṇyāha-Vāchana). (7) United with the echo of musical instruments the sound of their Puṇyāha-Vāchana on that occasion, deep and melodious as it was, filled Ayodhya. (8) Hearing that Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) had fasted with Sītā (a princess of the king of the Videhas) on that day the entire populace of Ayodhya felt highly rejoiced. (9)

ततः पौरजनः सर्वः श्रुत्वा रामाभिषेचनम् । प्रभातां रजनीं दृष्ट्वा चक्रे शोभयितुं पुरीम् ॥१०॥
सिताभ्रशिखराभेषु देवतायतनेषु च । चतुष्पथेषु रथ्यासु चैत्येष्वट्टालकेषु च ॥११॥
नानापण्यसमृद्धेषु वणिजामापणेषु च । कुटुम्बिनां समृद्धेषु श्रीमत्सु भवनेषु च ॥१२॥
सभासु चैव सर्वासु वृक्षेष्वालक्षितेषु च । ध्वजाः समुच्छ्रिताः साधु पताकाश्चाभवंस्तथा ॥१३॥
नटनर्तकसंघानां गायकानां च गायताम् । मनःकर्णसुखा वाचः शुश्राव जनता ततः ॥१४॥
रामाभिषेकयुक्ताश्च कथाश्चक्रुर्मिथो जनाः । रामाभिषेके सम्प्राप्ते चत्वरेषु गृहेषु च ॥१५॥
बाला अपि क्रीडमाना गृहद्वारेषु संघशः । रामाभिषवसंयुक्ताश्चक्रुरेव कथा मिथः ॥१६॥
कृतपुष्पोपहारश्च धूपगन्धाधिवासितः । राजमार्गः कृतः श्रीमान् पौरै रामाभिषेचने ॥१७॥
प्रकाशकरणार्थं च निशागमनशङ्कया । दीपवृक्षांस्तथा चक्रुरनुरथ्यासु सर्वशः ॥१८॥

Hearing of Śrī Rāma's installation and observing that the night had ended, all the citizens (of Ayodhya) now began to decorate the city. (10) Flags and buntings were set up aloft in a regular way on temples, which looked like mountain-peaks covered with white clouds, and at cross-roads, in the midst of streets, on sacrificial sheds and attics, as well as on the shops of merchants amply provided with commodities of various kinds, as also on the prosperous and splendid residences of householders, nay, on all public assembly halls as well as on (tops of) all prominent trees. (11—13) The populace (of Ayodhya) then listened to the dialogues of actors and the verbal representation of the movements of dancers and the music of the singing musicians, which delighted the mind and ears (of the listeners). (14) As the installation of Śrī Rāma approached people (meeting together) in quadrangles and houses mutually indulged in talks bearing (exclusively) on the installation of Śrī Rāma. (15) The boys too playing in batches in front of the doorways of their houses talked to one another on topics relating to the installation of Śrī Rāma (alone). (16) On the occasion of Śrī Rāma's installation the main road (of Ayodhya) was strewn with offerings of flowers and perfumed with the odour of incense by the citizens and thus rendered charming. (17) Nay, in order to provide light in anticipation of nightfall (by the time Śrī Rāma should move out in a procession through the streets of the city after installation as Prince Regent) the citizens also set up in every street throughout the city lamp-posts shaped like trees (with lights on every bough). (18)

अलंकारं पुरस्यैव कृत्वा तत्पुरवासिनः । आकाङ्क्षमाणा रामस्य यौवराज्याभिषेचनम् ॥१९॥
समेत्य संघशः सर्वे चत्वरेषु सभासु च । कथयन्तो मिथस्तत्र प्रशशंसुर्जनाधिपम् ॥२०॥
अहो महात्मा राजायमिक्ष्वाकुकुलनन्दनः । ज्ञात्वा वृद्धं स्वमात्मानं रामं राज्येऽभिषेक्ष्यति ॥२१॥
सर्वे ह्यनुगृहीताः स्म यन्नो रामो महीपतिः । चिराय भविता गोप्ता दृष्टलोकपरावरः ॥२२॥
अनुद्धतमना विद्वान् धर्मात्मा भ्रातृवत्सलः । यथा च भ्रातृषु स्निग्धस्तथास्मास्वपि राघवः ॥२३॥
चिरं जीवतु धर्मात्मा राजा दशरथोऽनघः । यत्प्रसादेनाभिषिक्तं रामं द्रक्ष्यामहे वयम् ॥२४॥
एवंविधं कथयतां पौराणां शुश्रुवुः परे । दिग्भ्यो विश्रुतवृत्तान्ताः प्राप्ता जानपदा जनाः ॥२५॥
ते तु दिग्भ्यः पुरीं प्राप्ता द्रष्टुं रामाभिषेचनम् । रामस्य पूरयामासुः पुरीं जानपदा जनाः ॥२६॥
जनौघैस्तैर्विसर्पद्भिः शुश्रुवे तत्र निःस्वनः । पर्वसूदीर्णवेगस्य सागरस्येव निःस्वनः ॥२७॥
ततस्तदिन्द्रक्षयसंनिभं पुरं दिदृक्षुभिर्जानपदैरुपाहितैः ।
समन्ततः सस्वनमाकुलं बभौ समुद्रयादोभिरिवार्णवोदकम् ॥२८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षष्ठः सर्गः ॥ ६ ॥

Having decorated the city as aforesaid and coming together in batches in quadrangles as well as in the public assembly halls (scattered throughout the city), all the residents of that city (of Ayodhya), longing as they did for the installation of Śrī Rāma in the office of Prince Regent, applauded Daśaratha (a ruler of men) while talking to one another on the spot :—(19-20) "High-souled indeed is this King Daśaratha (the delight of Ikṣwāku's race), who is going to install Śrī Rāma on the throne (of Ayodhya), perceiving himself to be aged ! (21) We are all grateful indeed (to God) that as the ruler of the globe, Śrī Rāma, who has seen (for himself) what is noble and ignoble in the world, will be our protector for long. (22) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) is unpresumptuous of mind, learned, pious, fond of his brothers, nay, as affectionate even to us as to his (own) brothers. (23) Long live the sinless King Daśaratha, whose mind is given to piety and by whose grace we shall see Rāma installed (as Prince Regent)." (24) Others, *viz*, people hailing from the countryside, who had heard the news (of the projected installation) and had flocked from all sides, heard the conversation of the citizens, who were uttering such remarks. (25) Having poured into the city (of Ayodhya) from all directions in order to witness the installation of Śrī Rāma (in the office of Prince Regent), the people from the countryside had flooded the (prospective) capital of Śrī Rāma. (26) The noise in that city was heard by the aforesaid multitudes of men while moving here and there as the roaring of an ocean whose impetuosity is accelerated on the full moons. (27) On that occasion the city (of Ayodhya),—which was full of noise and vied (in its splendour) with Amarāvatī (the capital of Indra) and which was crowded on all sides with the people of the countryside, that had collected (there) in their eagerness to behold the capital,—looked like the sea-water infested with aquatic creatures peculiar to the ocean. (28)

Thus ends Canto Six in the Ayodhya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तमः सर्गः

Canto VII

Beholding the festivities and finding Kausalyā bestowing large gifts of money on the Brahmans, Mantharā, a hunchbacked hereditary maid-servant of Queen Kaikeyī, who had accidentally ascended the roof of the palace, inquires of Śrī Rāma's erstwhile nurse the occasion for the festivities and, on being told of Śrī Rāma's forthcoming installation, feels enraged and, approaching Kaikeyī, instigates her to stop the installation. Kaikeyī, on the other hand, feels rejoiced over the news and gifts her a jewel as a token of her pleasure.

ज्ञातिदासी यतो जाता कैकेय्या तु सहोषिता । प्रासादं चन्द्रसंकाशमारुरोह यदृच्छया ॥ १ ॥
सिक्तराजपथां कृत्स्नां प्रकीर्णकमलोत्पलाम् । अयोध्यां मन्थरा तस्मात् प्रासादादन्ववैक्षत ॥ २ ॥
पताकाभिर्वरार्हाभिर्ध्वजैश्च समलंकृताम् । सिक्तां चन्दनतोयैश्च शिरःस्नातजनैर्युताम् ॥ ३ ॥
माल्यमोदकहस्तैश्च द्विजेन्द्रैरभिनादिताम् । शुक्लदेवगृहद्वारां सर्ववादित्रनादिताम् ॥ ४ ॥
सम्प्रहृष्टजनाकीर्णां ब्रह्मघोषनिनादिताम् । प्रहृष्टवरहस्त्यश्वां सम्प्रणर्दितगोवृषाम् ॥ ५ ॥

A maid-servant of Kaikeyī's parents*, of unknown birth, who had actually lived with her (ever since she came to Ayodhya), ascended by chance the roof of her palace, which shone like the moon (because of its white colour). (1) From that palace Mantharā (as the maid-servant was called) looked round the whole of Ayodhya, whose main road had been watered, (nay) which had been strewn with lotuses and lilies (here and there). (2) It had been fully decorated with costly buntings and flags and sprinkled with sandal-water and was crowded with men that had gone through a ceremonial bath (by washing their head as well, which was ordinarily left out apparently because of their growing long hair). (3) The city was rendered noisy on all sides by the chief of the Brahmans (moving hither and thither) with flowers and balls of sweets (for being offered as an auspicious present to Śrī Rāma on the occasion of his installation) in their hands. It contained temples with white doorways (made of crystal) and was resonant with the sound of all (sorts of) musical instruments. (4) (Nay) Ayodhya was thronged with excessively delighted men, echoed with the loud chanting of the Vedas and was distinguished by excellent and overjoyed elephants and horses as well as by roaring bulls and cows. (5)

---

* We read in the Padma-Purāṇa :—

मन्थरा नाम कार्यार्थमप्सरा प्रेषिता सुरैः । दासी काचन कैकेय्यै दत्ता केकयभूभृता ॥

"A celestial nymph, Mantharā by name, was deputed by the gods to carry out their mission (in the shape of sending Śrī Rāma into exile and thereby bringing about the destruction of Rāvaṇa). She was given away by the king of the Kekaya territory as a maid-servant to Kaikeyī."

हृष्टप्रमुदितैः पौरैरुच्छ्रितध्वजमालिनीम् । अयोध्यां मन्थरा दृष्ट्वा परं विस्मयमागता ॥ ६ ॥
सा हर्षोत्फुल्लनयनां पाण्डुरक्षौमवासिनीम् । अविदूरे स्थितां दृष्ट्वा धात्रीं पप्रच्छ मन्थरा ॥ ७ ॥
उत्तमेनाभिसंयुक्ता हर्षेणार्थपरा सती । राममाता धनं किं नु जनेभ्यः सम्प्रयच्छति ॥ ८ ॥
अतिमात्रं प्रहर्षः किं जनस्यास्य च शंस मे । कारयिष्यति किं वापि सम्प्रहृष्टो महीपतिः ॥ ९ ॥
विदीर्यमाणा हर्षेण धात्री तु परया मुदा । आचचक्षेऽथ कुब्जायै भूयसीं राघवे श्रियम् ॥१०॥
श्वः पुष्येण जितक्रोधं यौवराज्येन चानघम् । राजा दशरथो राममभिषेक्ता हि राघवम् ॥११॥
धात्र्यास्तु वचनं श्रुत्वा कुब्जा क्षिप्रममर्षिता । कैलासशिखराकारात् प्रासादादवरोहत ॥१२॥
सा दह्यमाना क्रोधेन मन्थरा पापदर्शिनी । शयानामेव कैकेयीमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१३॥

Mantharā was seized with great wonder to see Ayodhya brimming over with citizens thrilled and overjoyed (at the news of Śrī Rāma's installation), and decked with rows of tall flags. (6) Seeing Śrī Rāma's (quondam) nurse standing not very far (from her) dressed in white silk, her eyes blooming with joy, the said Mantharā inquired of her :—(7) "How is it that Empress Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother), full of supreme joy, is freely giving away riches to men, though devoted to wealth (herself)? (8) (Please) also tell me wherefore such excessive rapture is being felt by these people (of Ayodhya)? And what is the overjoyed emperor going to get done?" (9) Bursting with joy the nurse for her part forthwith spoke to the hunchbacked maid-servant with supreme delight of immense fortune (in the shape of sovereignty) being conferred (by the emperor) on Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (10) "Tomorrow under the asterism Puṣya, (she added) will Emperor Daśaratha positively install in the office of Prince Regent the sinless Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who has conquered wrath." (11) Filled with indignation to hear the report of the nurse, the hunchbacked maid-servant for her part got down at once from the roof of the palace, which resembled in shape a peak of Kailāsa. (12) Burning with anger, Mantharā, who scented foul play (in the move of the Emperor), spoke as follows to Kaikeyī even while she was reposing (in bed) :—(13)

उत्तिष्ठ मूढे किं शेषे भयं त्वामभिवर्तते । उपप्लुतमघौघेन नात्मानमवबुध्यसे ॥१४॥
अनिष्टे सुभगाकारे सौभाग्येन विकत्थसे । चलं हि तव सौभाग्यं नद्याः स्रोत इवोष्णगे ॥१५॥
एवमुक्ता तु कैकेयी रुष्टया परुषं वचः । कुब्जया पापदर्शिन्या विषादमगमत् परम् ॥१६॥
कैकेयी त्वब्रवीत् कुब्जां कच्चित् क्षेमं न मन्थरे । विषण्णवदनां हि त्वां लक्षये भृशदुःखिताम् ॥१७॥
मन्थरा तु वचः श्रुत्वा कैकेय्या मधुराक्षरम् । उवाच क्रोधसंयुक्ता वाक्यं वाक्यविशारदा ॥१८॥
सा विषण्णतरा भूत्वा कुब्जा तस्यां हितैषिणी । विषादयन्ती प्रोवाच भेदयन्ती च राघवम् ॥१९॥

"Get up, O deluded one! How can you keep lying down? Peril stares you in the face! You do not perceive yourself threatened by a flood of misery! (14) Though loathed (by the king), you boast of your good luck (in the shape of the goodwill of your husband), endowed (as you are) with a graceful appearance! Like the current of a river in hot weather, your good luck is but evanescent." (15) Addressed in a harsh language as aforesaid by the enraged hunchback, who suspected foul play (in the installation of Śrī Rāma as Prince Regent), Kaikeyī for her part gave way to great sorrow. (16) Kaikeyī in her turn replied to the hunchback (as follows) :—"Is not all well, O Mantharā? For I find you dejected in appearance and sore afflicted." (17) Incensed to hear the question of Kaikeyī, which was couched in sweet accents, Mantharā, for her part, who was a master of expression, spoke as follows. (18) Nay, getting all the more dejected (to hear the nonchalant question of Kaikeyī), the hunchback, who posed to be her (great) well-wisher, replied (as follows), inspiring dejection (into Kaikeyī's mind) and estranging (her from) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu):—(19)

अक्षयं सुमहद् देवि प्रवृत्तं त्वद्विनाशनम् । रामं दशरथो राजा यौवराज्येऽभिषेक्ष्यति ॥२०॥
साम्यगाधे भये मग्ना दुःखशोकसमन्विता । दह्यमानानलेनेव त्वद्धितार्थमिहागता ॥२१॥
तव दुःखेन कैकेयि मम दुःखं महद् भवेत् । त्वद्वृद्धौ मम वृद्धिश्च भवेदिह न संशयः ॥२२॥
नराधिपकुले जाता महिषी त्वं महीपतेः । उग्रत्वं राजधर्माणां कथं देवि न बुध्यसे ॥२३॥
धर्मवादी शठो भर्ता श्लक्ष्णवादी च दारुणः । शुद्धभावेन जानीषे तेनैवमतिसंधिता ॥२४॥
उपस्थितः प्रयुञ्जानस्त्वयि सान्त्वमनर्थकम् । अर्थेनैवाद्य ते भर्ता कौसल्यां योजयिष्यति ॥२५॥
अपवाह्य तु दुष्टात्मा भरतं तव बन्धुषु । काल्ये स्थापयिता रामं राज्ये निहतकण्टके ॥२६॥
शत्रुः पतिप्रवादेन मात्रेण हितकाम्यया । आशीविष इवाङ्केन बाले परिधृतस्त्वया ॥२७॥

"The very great work of ruining you, against which there is no remedy, has commenced, O queen! King Daśaratha is going to install Rāma in the office of Prince Regent. (20) Plunged in fathomless fear (on your score), (nay) full of agony and grief and burning as it were with fire I as such have come here to make known to you your (best) interest (in the matter). (21) Great suffering is sure to come to me due to your suffering, O Kaikeyī! And my advancement is sure to follow in the wake of your advancement: there is no doubt about it. (22) You were born in the race of kings and are the (favourite) consort of a king. How is it that you do not know the sternness of kingly duties, O royal lady? (23) Your husband is deceitful, though professing piety, and hard-hearted, though using sweet expressions. (Still) you consider him as blessed with a guileless heart and in this way stand deceived by him. (24) Standing by your side speaking kind words that have no meaning, your spouse is going this (very) day to invest Kausalyā alone with fortune (in the shape of sovereign powers for her son)! (25) Having sent away Bharata to (the kingdom of) your kinsfolk, the evil-minded king for his part will install Rāma next morning on the throne (of Ayodhya) now that all the thorns have been completely removed. (26) Like a venomous serpent reared by a mother on her (own) person with intent to do good to it, O puerile lady, an enemy under the appellation of spouse has been held by you close to your bosom. (27)

यथा हि कुर्याच्छत्रुर्वा सर्पो वा प्रत्युपेक्षितः । राज्ञा दशरथेनाद्य सपुत्रा त्वं तथा कृता ॥२८॥
पापेनानृतसान्त्वेन बाले नित्यं सुखोचिता । रामं स्थापयता राज्ये सानुबन्धा हता ह्यसि ॥२९॥
सा प्राप्तकालं कैकेयि क्षिप्रं कुरु हितं तव । त्रायस्व पुत्रमात्मानं मां च विस्मयदर्शने ॥३०॥
मन्थराया वचः श्रुत्वा शयनात् सा शुभानना । उत्तस्थौ हर्षसम्पूर्णा चन्द्रलेखेव शारदी ॥३१॥
अतीव सा तु संतुष्टा कैकेयी विस्मयान्विता । दिव्यमाभरणं तस्यै कुब्जायै प्रददौ शुभम् ॥३२॥
दत्त्वा त्वाभरणं तस्यै कुब्जायै प्रमदोत्तमा । कैकेयी मन्थरां हृष्टा पुनरेवाब्रवीदिदम् ॥३३॥
इदं तु मन्थरे मह्यमाख्यातं परमं प्रियम् । एतन्मे प्रियमाख्यातं किं वा भूयः करोमि ते ॥३४॥

रामे वा भरते वाहं विशेषं नोपलक्षये । तस्मात् तुष्टास्मि यद् राजा रामं राज्येऽभिषेक्ष्यति ॥३५॥
न मे परं किंचिदितो वरं पुनः प्रियं प्रियार्हे सुवचं वचोऽमृतम् ।
तथा ह्यवोचस्त्वमतः प्रियोत्तरं वरं परं ते प्रददामि तं वृणु ॥३६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्तमः सर्गः ॥ ७ ॥

"Along with your son (Bharata) you have been dealt with by Emperor Daśaratha quite in the same way today as an enemy or a serpent would behave, if ignored. (28) Ever deserving of ease you have indeed been ruined with your friends and relations, O young (inexperienced) lady, by the wicked king, uttering falsely kind words, by going to install Rāma on the throne (of Ayodhya). (29) As such, O Kaikeyī, promptly accomplish what is opportune in your interest and protect your son, your own self and me (too), O lady of marvellous insight !" (30) Flooded with joy to hear the report of Mantharā, that lady of charming appearance rose from her bed like the orb of the autumnal (full) moon. (31) Full of amazement and extremely gratified, the celebrated Kaikeyī for her part gave away to the aforesaid hunchback a wonderful and shining jewel. (32) Feeling positively rejoiced on having bestowed the jewel on that hunchback, Kaikeyī, the foremost of young ladies, once more spoke to Mantharā as follows :—(33) "This is indeed a most welcome news broken to me (by you), O Mantharā ! This is a delightful tidings to me. What more for that matter shall I do for you ? (34) I perceive no difference between Rāma, on the one hand, and Bharata, on the other. I am therefore pleased to know that the emperor is going to install Śrī Rāma on the throne. (35) No exquisite and agreeable nectar-like expression other than this could of course have been easily addressed to me, O woman deserving kindness ! Since (however) you have spoken as aforesaid (to me), I therefore offer to you another dearest boon; (please) ask it (of me)." (36)

Thus ends Canto Seven in the Ayodhya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टमः सर्गः

Canto VIII

While Mantharā was thus trying to impress on Kaikeyī's mind that the installation of Śrī Rāma on the throne of Ayodhya would spell disaster to Bharata, Kaikeyī for her part went on harping on Śrī Rāma's virtues and maintained that his installation as Prince Regent was quite welcome to her. Mantharā, however, goes on labouring her point and urges Kaikeyī to interrupt the installation.

मन्थरा त्वभ्यसूयैनामुत्सृज्याभरणं हि तत् । उवाचेदं ततो वाक्यं कोपदुःखसमन्विता ॥ १ ॥
हर्षं किमर्थमस्थाने कृतवत्यसि बालिशे । शोकसागरमध्यस्थं नात्मानमवबुध्यसे ॥ २ ॥

मनसा प्रहसामि त्वां देवि दुःखार्दिता सती । यच्छोचितव्ये हृष्टासि प्राप्य त्वं व्यसनं महत् ॥ ३ ॥
शोचामि दुर्मतित्वं ते का हि प्राज्ञा प्रहर्षयेत् । अरेः सपत्नीपुत्रस्य वृद्धिं मृत्योरिवागताम् ॥ ४ ॥
भरतादेव रामस्य राज्यसाधारणाद् भयम् । तद् विचिन्त्य विषण्णास्मि भयं भीताद्धि जायते ॥ ५ ॥
लक्ष्मणो हि महाबाहू रामं सर्वात्मना गतः । शत्रुघ्नश्चापि भरतं काकुत्स्थं लक्ष्मणो यथा ॥ ६ ॥
प्रत्यासन्नक्रमेणापि भरतस्यैव भामिनि । राज्यक्रमो विसृष्टस्तु तयोस्तावद्यवीयसोः ॥ ७ ॥
विदुषः क्षत्रचारित्रे प्राज्ञस्य प्राप्तकारिणः । भयात् प्रवेपे रामस्य चिन्तयन्ती तवात्मजम् ॥ ८ ॥

Censuring Kaikeyī and throwing away the said jewel (gifted by her), however, Mantharā thereupon spoke to her as follows, full of indignation (at the nonchalant attitude of Kaikeyī) and sorrow (at her inevitable ruin):— (1) "Wherefore have you expressed joy, O foolish lady, when there is no occasion for it? (Obviously) you do not perceive yourself surrounded by an ocean of grief? (2) Afflicted as I am with sorrow, O royal lady, I mentally laugh at you in that (even) on meeting with a great calamity you feel rejoiced where there is reason to mourn! (3) I pity your perverseness of mind; for (else) what wise lady would exult over the prospective exaltation of a stepson, a (veritable) foe, any more than on the imminent advance of death? (4) Rāma has (every) cause for fear from Bharata alone, who has an equal claim to sovereignty. I am sad to ponder that; for danger (naturally) follows (to the man who is feared) from an individual seized with fear. (5) The mighty-armed Lakṣmaṇa of course follows Rāma with all his being and Śatrughna too is a follower of Bharata in the same way as Lakṣmaṇa is of Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha). (6) According to the order of seniority too the claim to the throne (of Ayodhya) of Bharata alone can be pressed; that of Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna, who are (both) junior (to Bharata) is out of the question, O proud Lady! (7) I shudder with fear to think of the danger to your son from Rāma, who is not only learned and well-versed in the conduct of a Kṣatriya but also (promptly) does what is called for. (8)

सुभगा किल कौसल्या यस्याः पुत्रोऽभिषेक्ष्यते । यौवराज्येन महता श्वः पुष्येण द्विजोत्तमैः ॥ ९ ॥
प्राप्तां वसुमतीं प्रीतिं प्रतीतां हतविद्विषम् । उपस्थास्यसि कौसल्यां दासीवत् त्वं कृताञ्जलिः ॥१०॥
एवं च त्वं सहास्माभिस्तस्याः प्रेष्या भविष्यसि । पुत्रश्च तव रामस्य प्रेष्यत्वं हि गमिष्यति ॥११॥
हृष्टाः खलु भविष्यन्ति रामस्य परमाः स्त्रियः । अप्रहृष्टा भविष्यन्ति स्नुषास्ते भरतक्षये ॥१२॥
तां दृष्ट्वा परमप्रीतां ब्रुवन्तीं मन्थरां ततः । रामस्यैव गुणान् देवी कैकेयी प्रशशंस ह ॥१३॥
धर्मज्ञो गुणवान् दान्तः कृतज्ञः सत्यवाञ्छुचिः । रामो राजसुतो ज्येष्ठो यौवराज्यमतोऽर्हति ॥१४॥
भ्रातॄन् भृत्यांश्च दीर्घायुः पितृवत् पालयिष्यति । संतप्यसे कथं कुब्जे श्रुत्वा रामाभिषेचनम् ॥१५॥
भरतश्चापि रामस्य ध्रुवं वर्षशतात् परम् । पितृपैतामहं राज्यमवाप्स्यति नरर्षभः ॥१६॥

"Fortunate indeed is Kausalyā, whose son is going to be invested with the great office of Prince Regent tomorrow under the asterism Puṣya by the foremost of Brahmans. (9) With joined palms you will wait like a maid-servant on Kausalyā, when she has attained the rulership of the globe and disposed of her enemies (in the person of Bharata and yourself) and derived joy (thereby), trusted as she is of her husband. (10) In this way you too along with us will be reduced to the position of her maid-servant and your son as well will surely be degraded to the status of Rāma's servant. (11) The most blessed ladies of Rāma's household will feel positively rejoiced, while as a sequel to Bharata's destruction your daughter-in-law and her companions will feel unhappy." (12) Seeing the aforesaid Mantharā speaking most unkindly (as above), the godlike Kaikeyī thereupon merely extolled the virtues of Śrī Rāma (as follows): so the tradition goes. (13) "A knower of what is right, Śrī Rāma is a storehouse of virtues, disciplined, grateful, devoted to truth, upright and the eldest of the princes. He therefore deserves to be installed in the office of Prince Regent. (14) The long-lived child (Rāma) will look after his (younger) brothers and servants as a father (does his children). How (then) do you feel distressed, O hunchback, to hear of his installation ? (15) After a hundred years of Rāma's installation (when Rāma retires due to old age) Bharata too, the foremost of men, will inherit his ancestral throne (in the natural course). (16)

सा त्वमभ्युदये प्राप्ते दह्यमानेव मन्थरे । भविष्यति च कल्याणे किमिदं परितप्यसे ॥१७॥
यथा वै भरतो मान्यस्तथा भूयोऽपि राघवः । कौसल्यातोऽतिरिक्तं च मम शुश्रूषते बहु ॥१८॥
राज्यं यदि हि रामस्य भरतस्यापि तत् तदा । मन्यते हि यथाऽऽत्मानं तथा भ्रातॄंस्तु राघवः ॥१९॥
कैकेय्या वचनं श्रुत्वा मन्थरा भृशदुःखिता । दीर्घमुष्णं विनिःश्वस्य कैकेयीमिदमब्रवीत् ॥२०॥
अनर्थदर्शिनी मौर्ख्यान्नात्मानमवबुध्यसे । शोकव्यसनविस्तीर्णे मज्जन्ती दुःखसागरे ॥२१॥
भविता राघवो राजा राघवस्य च यः सुतः । राजवंशात्तु भरतः कैकेयि परिहास्यते ॥२२॥
नहि राज्ञः सुताः सर्वे राज्ये तिष्ठन्ति भामिनि । स्थाप्यमानेषु सर्वेषु सुमहाननयो भवेत् ॥२३॥
तस्माज्ज्येष्ठे हि कैकेयि राज्यतन्त्राणि पार्थिवाः । स्थापयन्त्यनवद्याङ्गि गुणवत्स्वितरेष्वपि ॥२४॥

"When an occasion for rejoicing (like the present one) is at hand and when a festive occasion (similar to the one at hand) is to come off in future (too in the shape of Bharata's installation, no matter even if it comes after a hundred years) how is it that, well-known as you are (for your wisdom), you feel agonized like this as though burning (with jealousy), O Mantharā ? (17) Precisely as Bharata is worthy of esteem (to me), Rāma (a scion of Raghu) is even more so. Nay, the latter does greater service to me than to Kausalyā. (18) If the throne really goes to Rāma, it would be equally Bharata's at that (very) time; for Rāma (a scion of Raghu) actually esteems his brothers just as his own self." (19) Heaving a doleful sigh, Mantharā, who was sore distressed to hear Kaikeyī's reply, spoke to the latter as follows:— (20) "Unable to perceive the truth due to stupidity, and about to sink in an ocean of misery, swollen through grief and adversity, you fail to assess your (real) position. (21) Rāma (a scion of Raghu) will be crowned king and after him he who is born as his son; whereas Bharata, O Kaikeyī, will be excluded from the royal line. (22) All the sons of a king do not retain their hold on the throne, O proud woman ! (For) if all are installed (on a throne at once) a very great impropriety will be done. (23) Therefore, kings, O Kaikeyī, actually hand over the reins of government to the eldest son, even though others (*viz*, the younger) may be full of virtues, O lady with faultless limbs ! (24)

असावत्यन्तनिर्भग्नस्तव पुत्रो भविष्यति । अनाथवत् सुखेभ्यश्च राजवंशाच्च वत्सले ॥२५॥
साहं त्वदर्थे सम्प्राप्ता त्वं तु मां नावबुध्यसे । सपत्निवृद्धौ या मे त्वं प्रदेयं दातुमिच्छसि ॥२६॥

ध्रुवं तु भरतं रामः प्राप्य राज्यमकण्टकम् । देशान्तरं नायियता लोकान्तरमथापि वा ॥२७॥
बाल एव तु मातुल्यं भरतो नायितस्त्वया । संनिकर्षाच्च सौहार्दं जायते स्थावरेष्विव ॥२८॥
भरतानुवशात् सोऽपि शत्रुघ्नस्तत्समं गतः । लक्ष्मणो हि यथा रामं तथायं भरतं गतः ॥२९॥
श्रूयते हि द्रुमः कश्चिच्छेत्तव्यो वनजीवनैः । संनिकर्षादिषीकाभिर्मोचितः परमाद् भयात् ॥३०॥
गोप्ता हि रामं सौमित्रिर्लक्ष्मणं चापि राघवः । अश्विनोरिव सौभ्रात्रं तयोर्लोकेषु विश्रुतम् ॥३१॥
तस्मान्न लक्ष्मणे रामः पापं किंचित् करिष्यति । रामस्तु भरते पापं कुर्यादेव न संशयः ॥३२॥

"Like a child without a guardian, your aforesaid son will be altogether deprived of comforts and cast out from the royal dynasty, O lady full of affection (for your child)! (25) Such as I am I have come (to you) to awaken you to your (own) interests, while you do not recognize my worth in that you seek to bestow a reward on me on the exaltation of your co-wife! (26) Having attained sovereignty shorn of enemies, Rāma for his part will surely send Bharata into exile or even to the other world. (27) Even as a boy Bharata, on the other hand, has been despatched by you to his maternal uncle's; while love is engendered through contiguity (even) as among inanimate beings (like trees and creepers). (28) In obedience to the will of Bharata the celebrated Śatrughna too left with him inasmuch as the latter is devoted to Bharata in the same way as Lakṣmaṇa is to Rāma. (29) A certain tree marked down for being felled by those living on the produce of forests was actually saved from the great danger by thorny shrubs through (sheer) proximity: so it is heard. (30) Indeed Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) will protect Rāma and Rāma (a scion of Raghu) too will protect Lakṣmaṇa. Their brotherly love (for each other), which is akin to the love of the Aświns (the twin-born physicians of gods), is widely known in (all) the worlds. (31) Therefore Rāma will never do any wrong to Lakṣmaṇa. Against Bharata, however, he must perpetrate a wrong: there is no doubt about it. (32)

तस्माद् राजगृहादेव वनं गच्छतु राघवः । एतद्धि रोचते मह्यं भृशं चापि हितं तव ॥३३॥
एवं ते ज्ञातिपक्षस्य श्रेयश्चैव भविष्यति । यदि चेद् भरतो धर्मात् पित्र्यं राज्यमवाप्स्यति ॥३४॥
स ते सुखोचितो बालो रामस्य सहजो रिपुः । समृद्धार्थस्य नष्टार्थो जीविष्यति कथं वशे ॥३५॥
अभिद्रुतमिवारण्ये सिंहेन गजयूथपम् । प्रच्छाद्यमानं रामेण भरतं त्रातुमर्हसि ॥३६॥
दर्पान्निराकृता पूर्वं त्वया सौभाग्यवत्तया । राममाता सपत्नी ते कथं वैरं न यातयेत् ॥३७॥

यदा च रामः पृथिवीमवाप्स्यते प्रभूतरत्नाकरशैलसंयुताम् ।
तदा गमिष्यस्यशुभं पराभवं सहैव दीना भरतेन भामिनि ॥३८॥
यदा हि रामः पृथिवीमवाप्स्यते ध्रुवं प्रणष्टो भरतो भविष्यति ।
अतो हि संचिन्तय राज्यमात्मजे परस्य चैवास्य विवासकारणम् ॥३९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टमः सर्गः ॥ ८ ॥

"Therefore let Rāma (a scion of Raghu) retire to the woods even from the palace. This alone appeals to me and is also supremely good for you. (33) In case Bharata rightly secures his paternal throne (as promised by his father), then only will the welfare of those (like myself) belonging to the side of your parents be ensured. (34) Having lost his fortune, how will that boy of yours, a born enemy of Rāma—whose object has been realized—and deserving a life of ease, live in subjection (to Rāma)? (35) You ought to protect Bharata when like the leader of a herd of elephants chased in a forest by a lion he is overpowered by Rāma. (36) It is improbable that your co-wife, Kausalyā (mother of Rāma), who has been slighted by you in the past out of pride born of your being loved by your husband, will not repay her grudge (to you). (37) Nay, when Rāma secures dominion of the earth with its seas and mountains containing abundant jewels, you will at that time helplessly suffer unwelcome ignominy alone (in the shape of servitude) along with Bharata, O proud lady! (38) As soon as Rāma attains sovereignty of the globe Bharata will surely meet his doom. Therefore actually devise (some) means of securing sovereignty in favour of your son (Bharata) as well as an excuse for banishing Rāma, his (born) enemy." (39)

Thus ends Canto Eight in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

नवमः सर्गः

Canto IX

Kaikeyī, whose heart was poisoned by the malicious gossip of Mantharā as aforesaid, takes a vow to see that Rāma is sent into exile and Bharata installed as Prince Regent, and asks Mantharā herself how to secure that consummation. Mantharā tells her how in the course of a conflict between gods and demons, in which Daśaratha's help was enlisted by the gods, the queen, who had accompanied her husband to the field of operations and had rendered valuable assistance to him at a critical juncture, was offered a couple of boons, which she had kept in abeyance. Mantharā now asks Kaikeyī to demand the banishment of Rāma and the installation of Bharata against the two promised boons. Kaikeyī accordingly throws away her ornaments and lies down on the bare floor in the sulking-room in a sullen mood.

एवमुक्ता तु कैकेयी क्रोधेन ज्वलितानना । दीर्घमुष्णं विनिःश्वस्य मन्थरामिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
अद्य राममितः क्षिप्रं वनं प्रस्थापयाम्यहम् । यौवराज्ये च भरतं क्षिप्रमेवाभिषेचये ॥ २ ॥
इदं त्विदानीं सम्पश्य केनोपायेन साधये । भरतः प्राप्नुयाद् राज्यं न तु रामः कथंचन ॥ ३ ॥
एवमुक्ता तु सा देव्या मन्थरा पापदर्शिनी । रामार्थमुपहिंसन्ती कैकेयीमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ४ ॥
हन्तेदानीं प्रपश्य त्वं कैकेयि श्रूयतां वचः । यथा ते भरतो राज्यं पुत्रः प्राप्स्यति केवलम् ॥ ५ ॥
किं न स्मरसि कैकेयि स्मरन्ती वा निगूहसे । यदुच्यमानमात्मार्थं मत्तस्त्वं श्रोतुमिच्छसि ॥ ६ ॥
मयोच्यमानं यदि ते श्रोतुं छन्दो विलासिनि । श्रूयतामभिधास्यामि श्रुत्वा चैतद् विधीयताम् ॥ ७ ॥
श्रुत्वैवं वचनं तस्या मन्थरायास्तु कैकयी । किंचिदुत्थाय शयनात् स्वास्तीर्णादिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ८ ॥

कथयस्व ममोपायं केनोपायेन मन्थरे । भरतः प्राप्नुयाद् राज्यं न तु रामः कथंचन ॥ ९ ॥
एवमुक्ता तदा देव्या मन्थरा पापदर्शिनी । रामार्थमुपहिंसन्ती कैकेयीमिदमब्रवीत् ॥१०॥

Heaving a doleful sigh, when told thus, Kaikeyī, for her part, whose face was flushed with anger, spoke to Mantharā as follows :—(1) "I shall without delay despatch Rāma to the forest from here this (very) day and shall further install Bharata in the office of Prince Regent without loss of time. (2) Now just ponder over this : by what means should I be able to ensure that Bharata attains sovereignty but not Rāma on any account..?" (3) Addressed thus by the queen, Mantharā of sinful mind for her part replied to Kaikeyī as follows, damaging the (mundane) interest of Śrī Rāma :—(4) "Ah, presently see you, O Kaikeyī, what I do. Listen to my advice whereby your son, Bharata, alone will attain sovereignty. (5) Since you wish to hear from me of the plan conducive to your (own) interest, which has (already) been made known (by you off and on), do you not remember it (yourself) or do you hide it (from me), even though you remember it, O Kaikeyī ! (6) If your intention is to hear of it as told by me, O lady full of charms, I shall (presently) tell you; (please) listen and, when you have heard of it, it may be acted upon." (7) Hearing this reply of the aforesaid Mantharā and rising a little (out of deference mixed with curiosity) from her bed, spread by herself (and therefore faultless), Kaikeyī for her part spoke as follows :—(8) "Point out to me the means. By what device, O Mantharā, may Bharata attain sovereignty and not Rāma in any case ?" (9) Requested thus by the queen on that occasion, Mantharā of sinful intent spoke to Kaikeyī as follows, crushing the interest of Śrī Rāma :—(10)

पुरा देवासुरे युद्धे सह राजर्षिभिः पतिः । अगच्छत् त्वामुपादाय देवराजस्य साह्यकृत् ॥११॥
दिशामास्थाय कैकेयि दक्षिणां दण्डकान् प्रति । वैजयन्तमिति ख्यातं पुरं यत्र तिमिध्वजः ॥१२॥
स शम्बर इति ख्यातः शतमायो महासुरः । ददौ शक्रस्य संग्रामं देवसंघैरनिर्जितः ॥१३॥
तस्मिन् महति संग्रामे पुरुषान् क्षतविक्षतान् । रात्रौ प्रसुप्तान् घ्नन्ति स्म तरसापास्य राक्षसाः ॥१४॥
तत्राकरोन्महायुद्धं राजा दशरथस्तदा । असुरैश्च महाबाहुः शस्त्रैश्च शकलीकृतः ॥१५॥
अपवाह्य त्वया देवि संग्रामान्नष्टचेतनः । तत्रापि विक्षतः शस्त्रैः पतिस्ते रक्षितस्त्वया ॥१६॥

"Proceeding in a southerly direction in order to help the cause of Indra (the ruler of gods) in a war between gods and demons in the former days along with (other dependent) royal sages, and taking you (with him), your husband (Emperor Daśaratha), O Kaikeyī, marched against the city known by the name of Vaijayanta in the Daṇḍaka forest, where lived the demon Timidhwaja (so called because his ensign bore the emblem of Timi, a species of fish of enormous size). (11-12) (Also) known as Śambara, that great demon, who knew hundreds of conjuring tricks and could not be conquered (even) by hosts of gods, offered battle to Indra. (13) Quickly carrying off (from their beds) at night the warriors injured and grievously wounded in the course of that great conflict and lying fast asleep, the ogre-like demons used to make short work of them. (14) There Emperor Daśaratha fought a great battle with the demons and the mighty-armed hero was lacerated with weapons and missiles on that occasion. (15) Having been removed in an unconscious state from the field of battle by you, O glorious lady, your husband (King Daśaratha) was mangled with weapons even there and saved by you (by being taken to a still safer retreat). (16)

तुष्टेन तेन दत्तौ ते द्वौ वरौ शुभदर्शने । स त्वयोक्तः पतिर्देवि यदेच्छेयं तदा वरम् ॥१७॥
गृह्णीयां तु तदा भर्तस्तथेत्युक्तं महात्मना । अनभिज्ञा ह्यहं देवि त्वयैव कथितं पुरा ॥१८॥
कथैषा तव तु स्नेहान्मनसा धार्यते मया । रामाभिषेकसम्भारान् निगृह्य विनिवर्तय ॥१९॥
तौ च याचस्व भर्तारं भरतस्याभिषेचनम् । प्रव्राजनं तु रामस्य वर्षाणि च चतुर्दश ॥२०॥
चतुर्दश हि वर्षाणि रामे प्रव्राजिते वनम् । प्रजाभावगतस्नेहः स्थिरः पुत्रो भविष्यति ॥२१॥
क्रोधागारं प्रविश्याद्य क्रुद्धेवाश्वपतेः सुते । शेष्वानन्तर्हितायां त्वं भूमौ मलिनवासिनी ॥२२॥
मा स्मैनं प्रत्युदीक्षेथा मा चैनमभिभाषथाः । रुदन्ती पार्थिवं दृष्ट्वा जगत्यां शोकलालसा ॥२३॥
दयिता त्वं सदा भर्तुरत्र मे नास्ति संशयः । त्वत्कृते च महाराजो विशेदपि हुताशनम् ॥२४॥
न त्वां क्रोधयितुं शक्तो न क्रुद्धां प्रत्युदीक्षितुम् । तव प्रियार्थं राजा तु प्राणानपि परित्यजेत् ॥२५॥

"A couple of boons were offered to you by him, pleased as he was (with your invaluable services on two occasions one after another), O lady with charming looks! The said Daśaratha (your husband), O queen, was (however) told by you (as follows):—'I shall certainly claim them when I will, O lord!' 'Amen!' was the answer then given by the high-souled monarch. I was of course unaware of it, O queen! It was by you alone that the episode was narrated in the days gone by. (17-18) Out of affection for you, however, this incident is treasured by me in my mind. Binding your husband with a promise, put a stop to the preparations (already in hand) for Rāma's installation. (19) Nay, ask of your husband the aforesaid two boons in the shape of Bharata's installation (as Prince Regent) and the banishment of Rāma for fourteen years on the other hand. (20) Surely when Rāma has been sent into exile for fourteen years your son (Bharata) will have sown the seeds of affection (for himself) in the heart of his subjects and will have been established (on the throne). (21) As though indignant, enter the sulking-room this (very) day, O daughter of Aśwapati, and, clad in soiled garments, lie down you on the bare floor. (22) Start weeping the moment you see the king and lying on the ground plunged in grief, neither look at him nor speak to him. (23) You are ever beloved of your spouse: I have no doubt about it. Nay, for your sake the emperor can even enter fire. (24) The king dare not provoke you nor can he bear to see you angry. For your pleasure the king can literally lay down his very life. (25)

नह्यतिक्रमितुं शक्तस्तव वाक्यं महीपतिः । मन्दस्वभावे बुध्यस्व सौभाग्यबलमात्मनः ॥२६॥
मणिमुक्तासुवर्णानि रत्नानि विविधानि च । दद्याद् दशरथो राजा मा स्म तेषु मनः कृथाः ॥२७॥
यौ तौ देवासुरे युद्धे वरौ दशरथो ददौ । तौ स्मारय महाभागे सोऽर्थो न त्वां क्रमेदति ॥२८॥
यदा तु ते वरं दद्यात् स्वयमुत्थाप्य राघवः । व्यवस्थाप्य महाराजं त्वमिमं वृणुया वरम् ॥२९॥
रामप्रव्रजनं दूरं नव वर्षाणि पञ्च च । भरतः क्रियतां राजा पृथिव्यां पार्थिवर्षभ ॥३०॥
चतुर्दश हि वर्षाणि रामे प्रव्राजिते वनम् । रूढश्च कृतमूलश्च शेषं स्थास्यति ते सुतः ॥३१॥
रामप्रव्राजनं चैव देवि याचस्व तं वरम् । एवं सेत्स्यन्ति पुत्रस्य सर्वार्थास्तव कामिनि ॥३२॥
एवं प्रव्राजितश्चैव रामोऽरामो भविष्यति । भरतश्च गतामित्रस्तव राजा भविष्यति ॥३३॥
येन कालेन रामश्च वनात् प्रत्यागमिष्यति । अन्तर्बहिश्च पुत्रस्ते कृतमूलो भविष्यति ॥३४॥
संगृहीतमनुष्यश्च सुहृद्भिः साकमात्मवान् । प्राप्तकालं नु मन्येऽहं राजानं वीतसाध्वसा ॥३५॥

रामाभिषेकसंकल्पान्निगृह्य विनिवर्तय । अनर्थमर्थरूपेण ग्राहिता सा ततस्तया ॥३६॥
हृष्टा प्रतीता कैकेयी मन्थरामिदमब्रवीत् । सा हि वाक्येन कुब्जायाः किशोरीवोत्पथं गता ॥३७॥
कैकेयी विस्मयं प्राप्य परं परमदर्शना । प्रज्ञां ते नावजानामि श्रेष्ठे श्रेष्ठाभिधायिनि ॥३८॥
पृथिव्यामसि कुब्जानामुत्तमा बुद्धिनिश्चये । त्वमेव तु ममार्थेषु नित्ययुक्ता हितैषिणी ॥३९॥
नाहं समवबुध्येयं कुब्जे राज्ञश्चिकीर्षितम् । सन्ति दुःसंस्थिताः कुब्जे वक्राः परमपापिकाः ॥४०॥

"The monarch dare not in any case transgress your command. Realize the potency of your charms, O lady of sluggish disposition! (26) King Daśaratha may offer (you) gems, pearls and gold as well as precious stones of various kinds; (pray) do not set your mind on them. (27) Remind the monarch, O highly blessed lady, of those two momentous boons which Daśaratha offered (to you) in the course of the conflict between gods and demons. Let not that cherished object (in the shape of Bharata's installation as Prince Regent and Rāma's exile) slip out of your mind. (28) When, however, lifting you up personally, Daśaratha (a scion of Raghu) offers to you the (promised) boon, ask you the following boon of the emperor, binding him with an oath :—(29) 'Let Rāma be sent afar into exile for fourteen years and let Bharata be installed as the ruler of the globe, O jewel among kings!' (30) For, when Rāma is sent into exile for fourteen years, your son will have been established and firmly rooted (on the throne of Ayodhya by the time Rāma returns after completing the term of his exile) and will continue (as king) for the rest of his life. (31) (Over and above the installation of Bharata as Prince Regent) also positively ask of him (the king) the boon in the shape of Rāma's banishment, O glorious lady! In this way all the objects of your son (Bharata) will be accomplished, O seeker of your son's kingship! (32) Nay, exiled thus, Rāma will surely become unpopular, while your son, Bharata, will be a ruler without enemies. (33) And by the time Rāma returns from the forest your son (Bharata) will be firmly established with his relations and friends internally (in the mind of his subjects) as well as externally (in his dominion) and will have won people (to his side), a man of self-control as he is. I regard this as an opportune moment (for carrying out your design). Binding the monarch (with an oath), fearlessly deter him from his resolve of installing Rāma (as Prince Regent)." Taught by the hunchback to look upon evil as good and convinced accordingly, the aforesaid Kaikeyī thereupon felt delighted (in mind). Having positively gone astray like a young (inexperienced) girl, thanks to the advice of the hunchback, though possessed of great wisdom, and experiencing great astonishment, Kaikeyī spoke to Mantharā as follows :— "I will not disparage your wisdom, O noblest woman, who are imparting the best counsel (to me). (34—38) You are the best among the hunchbacked on earth in judgment arrived at through reason. You are in fact my only well-wisher, and ever devoted to my interests. (39) I cannot fully make out the intention of the king, O hunchback! Deformed women, O hunchback, are (generally) ill-disposed and most sinful. (You are, however, an honourable exception). (40)

त्वं पद्ममिव वातेन संनता प्रियदर्शना । उरस्तेऽभिनिविष्टं वै यावत् स्कन्धात् समुन्नतम् ॥४१॥
अधस्ताच्चोदरं शान्तं सुनाभमिव लज्जितम् । प्रतिपूर्णं च जघनं सुपीनौ च पयोधरौ ॥४२॥
विमलेन्दुसमं वक्त्रमहो राजसि मन्थरे । जघनं तव निर्मृष्टं रशनादामभूषितम् ॥४३॥

जङ्घे भृशमुपन्यस्ते पादौ च व्यायतावुभौ । त्वमायताभ्यां सक्थिभ्यां मन्थरे क्षौमवासिनी ॥४४॥
अग्रतो मम गच्छन्ती राजसेऽतीव शोभने । आसन् याः शम्बरे मायाः सहस्रमसुराधिपे ॥४५॥
हृदये ते निविष्टास्ता भूयश्चान्याः सहस्रशः । तदेव स्थगु यद् दीर्घं रथघोणमिवायतम् ॥४६॥
मतयः क्षत्रविद्याश्च मायाश्चात्र वसन्ति ते । अत्र तेऽहं प्रमोक्ष्यामि मालां कुब्जे हिरण्मयीम् ॥४७॥
अभिषिक्ते च भरते राघवे च वनं गते । जात्येन च सुवर्णेन सुनिष्टप्तेन सुन्दरि ॥४८॥
लब्धार्था च प्रतीता च लेपयिष्यामि ते स्थगु । मुखे च तिलकं चित्रं जातरूपमयं शुभम् ॥४९॥
कारयिष्यामि ते कुब्जे शुभान्याभरणानि च । परिधाय शुभे वस्त्रे देवतेव चरिष्यसि ॥५०॥

"Though doubled up (even) as a lotus by wind, you are charming to look at. Only your breast is deformed by a hump and is unusually projected up to the shoulders. (41) Below (the breast) there is your abdomen of modest dimensions with a shapely navel, looking abashed as it were (of the unusually protruding breast). Again there are your broad hinder part and remarkably full breasts. (42) Your countenance resembles the spotless moon. Oh, you look (so) splendid (with it)! Hairless (and therefore) smooth is your hinder part, adorned (as it is) with a girdle of tiny bells. (43) Most contiguous are your shanks and both your feet are exceptionally long. With your long thighs you look most charming while walking before me, O good-looking Mantharā, clad in a silk garment. A thousand conjuring tricks, which were known to Śambara, the overlord of demons, and still other tricks in thousands lie treasured in your heart. They alone constitute your big hump, which is prominent as the hub of a wheel of a chariot. (44—46) In this (hump of yours) reside thoughts (of various kinds), diplomacies and artifices. Nay, on this hump of yours I shall reverently drop a chain of molten gold of the highest quality, O lovely Mantharā, when Bharata is installed and Rāma (a scion of Raghu) has proceeded to the forest. (47-48) When I have realized my (aforesaid) object and am (thus) pleased, I shall further paint your hump with sandal-paste and shall cause to be stuck (with wax etc.) on your forehead a sacred and beautiful tiny disk of gold inlaid with precious stones. Wearing a pair of garments (one about your loins and another covering your trunk) and lovely ornaments, you will move about like a goddess, O hunchback! (49-50)

चन्द्रमाह्वयमानेन मुखेनाप्रतिमानना । गमिष्यसि गतिं मुख्यां गर्वयन्ती द्विषज्जने ॥५१॥
तवापि कुब्जाः कुब्जायाः सर्वाभरणभूषिताः । पादौ परिचरिष्यन्ति यथैव त्वं सदा मम ॥५२॥
इति प्रशस्यमाना सा कैकेयीमिदमब्रवीत् । शयानां शयने शुभ्रे वेद्यामग्निशिखामिव ॥५३॥
गतोदके सेतुबन्धो न कल्याणि विधीयते । उत्तिष्ठ कुरु कल्याणं राजानमनुदर्शय ॥५४॥
तथा प्रोत्साहिता देवी गत्वा मन्थरया सह । क्रोधागारं विशालाक्षी सौभाग्यमदगर्विता ॥५५॥
अनेकशतसाहस्रं मुक्ताहारं वराङ्गना । अवमुच्य वरार्हाणि शुभान्याभरणानि च ॥५६॥
तदा हेमोपमा तत्र कुब्जावाक्यवशंगता । संविश्य भूमौ कैकेयी मन्थरामिदमब्रवीत् ॥५७॥
इह वा मां मृतां कुब्जे नृपायावेदयिष्यसि । वनं तु राघवे प्राप्ते भरतः प्राप्स्यते क्षितिम् ॥५८॥

"Possessed of a peerless countenance, you shall by your face vying with the moon attain a foremost position (among women), behaving with pride in the midst of my enemies (co-wives). (51) Adorned with all kinds of ornaments (other) hunchbacked women will knead your feet, hunchbacked even though you are, precisely as you always do mine." (52) Being flattered thus, Mantharā spoke as follows to Kaikeyī, lying on a spotless bed (even) like a (sacred) flame burning on an altar:—(53) "No dam is constructed (across a stream) when its water has (already) flowed past, O blessed lady! (It will be no use your asking a boon of the emperor when Rāma has already been installed as Prince Regent). (Therefore) get up, work your salvation and show yourself to the king (in an angry mood). (54) Repairing along with Mantharā to the sulking-chamber, when incited thus by the latter, and casting away her pearl necklace, costing many lakhs, and (other) beautiful and costly ornaments, and lying down on the floor, the large-eyed Queen Kaikeyī, an excellent woman, who possessed a golden complexion, and was puffed up with pride born of comeliness and was dominated by the words of the hunchback, then spoke as follows to, Mantharā on that spot:—(55—57) "Either on Rāma (a scion of Raghu) having gone to the forest (as an exile), Bharata will obtain the kingdom of the earth or you shall report me dead on this (very) spot to the (apathetic) king, O hunchback! (58)

सुवर्णेन न मे ह्यर्थो न रत्नैर्न च भोजनैः । एष मे जीवितस्यान्तो रामो यद्यभिषिच्यते ॥५९॥

अथो पुनस्तां महिषीं महीक्षितो वचोभिरत्यर्थमहापराक्रमैः ।
उवाच कुब्जा भरतस्य मातरं हितं वचो राममुपेत्य चाहितम् ॥६०॥
प्रपत्स्यते राज्यमिदं हि राघवो यदि ध्रुवं त्वं ससुता च तप्स्यसे ।
ततो हि कल्याणि यतस्व तत् तथा यथा सुतस्ते भरतोऽभिषेक्ष्यते ॥६१॥
तथातिविद्धा महिषीति कुब्जया समाहता वागिषुभिर्मुहुर्मुहुः ।
विधाय हस्तौ हृदयेऽतिविस्मिता शशंस कुब्जां कुपिता पुनः पुनः ॥६२॥
यमस्य वा मां विषयं गतामितो निशम्य कुब्जे प्रतिवेदयिष्यसि ।
वनं गते वा सुचिराय राघवे समृद्धकामो भरतो भविष्यति ॥६३॥
अहं हि नैवास्तरणानि न स्रजो न चन्दनं नाञ्जनपानभोजनम् ।
न किंचिदिच्छामि न चेह जीवनं न चेदितो गच्छति राघवो वनम् ॥६४॥

"For I have nothing to do with gold nor with precious stones nor with meals (any longer). This will be the end of my life if Rāma is installed (as Prince Regent)." (59) The hunchback then tendered once more to the king's spouse and Bharata's mother in most cruel words counsel which was friendly to her and hostile with reference to Rāma:—(60) "If Rāma (a scion of Raghu) actually inherits this kingdom, you will surely suffer with your son. Therefore, O blessed lady, take adequate steps to ensure that your son, Bharata, may be installed (as Prince Regent)! (61) Repeatedly struck by the hunchback again and again with shafts in the shape of the aforesaid words and pierced to the quick (by them), nay, greatly amazed and enraged again and again (at the hostile attitude of her loving husband), the queen (Kaikeyī) spoke to the hunchback (as follows), placing her hands on her heart (as a token of amazement):—(62) "Either Bharata will have his desire fulfilled on Rāma (a scion of Raghu) having retired to the forest for a considerably long period, or hearing of my having departed from this world for the region of Death, O hunchback, you will report me as dead (to the king). (63) In case Rāma (a scion of Raghu) does not proceed to the forest from Ayodhya I shall really speaking on no account seek bed-clothes nor garlands nor sandal-paste nor eye-salve, food or drink, nor anything else nor even life in this world." (64)

अथैवमुक्त्वा वचनं सुदारुणं निधाय सर्वाभरणानि भामिनी ।
असंस्कृतामास्तरणेन मेदिनीं तदाधिशिश्ये पतितेव किंनरी ॥६५॥
उदीर्णसंरम्भतमोवृतानना तदावमुक्तोत्तममाल्यभूषणा ।
नरेन्द्रपत्नी विमना बभूव सा तमोवृता द्यौरिव मग्नतारका ॥६६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे नवमः सर्गः ॥ ९ ॥

Having made this most cruel utterance and forthwith shedding all ornaments, the proud woman (Kaikeyī) then lay down, like a Kinnara woman fallen from heaven, on the floor not covered with any bed-cloth. (65) With her face veiled by darkness in the shape of violent rage and with her excellent garlands and ornaments cast to the ground, that disconsolate queen (Kaikeyī) looked on that occasion like the firmament enveloped in darkness with its stars swallowed up (by it). (66)

Thus ends Canto Nine in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

दशमः सर्गः

Canto X

Having told off Sumantra and others to get together necessaries for the installation of Śrī Rāma, Daśaratha calls on Kaikeyī to break the happy news to her. Not finding her in her apartments, however, he makes inquiries from the portress, who tells him of her presence in the sulking-chamber. The emperor calls on her there and, lifting her up, cajoles her.

विदर्शिता यदा देवी कुब्जया पापया भृशम् । तदा शेते स्म सा भूमौ दिग्धविद्धेव किंनरी ॥ १ ॥
निश्चित्य मनसा कृत्यं सा सम्यगिति भामिनी । मन्थरायै शनैः सर्वमाचचक्षे विचक्षणा ॥ २ ॥
सा दीना निश्चयं कृत्वा मन्थरावाक्यमोहिता । नागकन्येव निःश्वस्य दीर्घमुष्णं च भामिनी ॥ ३ ॥
मुहूर्तं चिन्तयामास मार्गमात्मसुखावहम् । सा सुहृच्चार्थकामा च तं निशम्य विनिश्चयम् ॥ ४ ॥
बभूव परमप्रीता सिद्धिं प्राप्येव मन्थरा । अथ सा रुषिता देवी सम्यक्कृत्वा विनिश्चयम् ॥ ५ ॥
संविवेशाबला भूमौ निवेश्य भ्रुकुटिं मुखे । ततश्चित्राणि माल्यानि दिव्यान्याभरणानि च ॥ ६ ॥
अपविद्धानि कैकेय्या तानि भूमिं प्रपेदिरे । तया तान्यपविद्धानि माल्यान्याभरणानि च ॥ ७ ॥
अशोभयन्त वसुधां नक्षत्राणि यथा नभः । क्रोधागारे च पतिता सा बभौ मलिनाम्बरा ॥ ८ ॥
एकवेणीं दृढां बद्ध्वा गतसत्त्वेव किंनरी । आज्ञाप्य तु महाराजो राघवस्याभिषेचनम् ॥ ९ ॥
उपस्थानमनुज्ञाप्य प्रविवेश निवेशनम् । अद्य रामाभिषेको वै प्रसिद्ध इति जज्ञिवान् ॥१०॥
प्रियार्हां प्रियमाख्यातुं विवेशान्तःपुरं वशी ।

When the queen was fully misguided by the sinful hunchback, she lay down on the floor looking like a Kinnara woman pierced with an envenomed shaft. (1) Concluding in her mind the plan of action (chalked out by Mantharā) to be well-conceived, that proud woman, shrewd as she was, gradually unfolded to Mantharā everything (that was intended by her). (2) Having arrived at a (definite) conclusion and heaving a doleful sigh like a girl of the Nāgas, that proud woman, wretched as she was and had been deluded by the advice of Mantharā, pondered awhile the path leading to her own happiness. The aforesaid Mantharā, who was friendly (to the queen) and sought her welfare, was highly pleased to hear of that resolution, as though she had attained the consummation of her desires. Having made a firm resolve and assuming a frowning aspect, the aforesaid angry queen forthwith lay down on the floor, belonging as she did to the weaker sex. Then such wreaths of variegated flowers and wonderful ornaments as had been taken off by Kaikeyī were left on the floor (instead of being consigned back to the casket). Those garlands and ornaments taken off by her adorned the floor (even) as stars adorn the sky. Nay, lying (on the floor) in the sulking-chamber with soiled clothes, having tightly fastened her hair a single braid into she looked like a Kinnara woman whose energy had departed. Having issued orders for the installation of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) and taking leave of his (executive council), the emperor for his part retired to his private apartments. He (now) thought that the installation of Rāma had been proclaimed only that day. (So) in order to break the delightful news to Kaikeyī (who deserved affection), Daśaratha (who was a man of self-control) made his way into the gynaeceum.

स कैकेय्या गृहं श्रेष्ठं प्रविवेश महायशाः ॥११॥
पाण्डुराभ्रमिवाकाशं राहुयुक्तं निशाकरः । शुकबर्हिसमायुक्तं क्रौञ्चहंसरुतायुतम् ॥१२॥
वादित्ररवसंघुष्टं कुब्जावामनिकायुतम् । लतागृहैश्चित्रगृहैश्चम्पकाशोकशोभितैः ॥१३॥
दान्तराजतसौवर्णवेदिकाभिः समायुतम् । नित्यपुष्पफलैर्वृक्षैर्वापीभिरुपशोभितम् ॥१४॥
दन्तराजतसौवर्णैः संवृतं परमासनैः । विविधैरन्नपानैश्च भक्ष्यैश्च विविधैरपि ॥१५॥
उपपन्नं महार्हैश्च भूषणैस्त्रिदिवोपमम् । स प्रविश्य महाराजः स्वमन्तःपुरमृद्धिमत् ॥१६॥
न ददर्श स्त्रियं राजा कैकेयीं शयनोत्तमे ।

(To begin with) the highly illustrious king entered the excellent abode of Kaikeyī (even) as the moon (that brings about the night) would enter the sky overcast with white clouds and marked with the presence of Rāhu (the shadow of the earth, which falls on the moon and eclipses it). The palace was crowded with parrots and peacocks, (nay) characterized by the notes of cranes and swans and rendered noisy by the sound of musical instruments. It was full of hunched and dwarf women and abounded in arbours and picture galleries adorned with Aśoka and Champaka trees, as well as in raised seats made of ivory, silver and gold. It was graced with trees ever laden with blossoms and fruits as well as with extensive wells provided with descents and was furnished with excellent seats of ivory, silver and gold. (Nay) it was provided with food and drinks of various kinds as well as with edibles of every description and adorned with costly ornaments and vied with paradise. Freely entering his own gynaeceum, (which was) full of riches, the king did not perceive his better half, Kaikeyī, on her excellent bed.

स कामबलसंयुक्तो रत्यर्थी मनुजाधिपः ॥१७॥
अपश्यन् दयितां भार्यां पप्रच्छ विषसाद च । नहि तस्य पुरा देवी तां वेलामत्यवर्तत ॥१८॥
न च राजा गृहं शून्यं प्रविवेश कदाचन । ततो गृहगतो राजा कैकेयीं पर्यपृच्छत ॥१९॥
यथापुरमविज्ञाय स्वार्थलिप्सुमपण्डिताम् । प्रतिहारी ह्यथोवाच संत्रस्ता तु कृताञ्जलिः ॥२०॥
देव देवी भृशं क्रुद्धा क्रोधागारमभिद्रुता । प्रतीहार्या वचः श्रुत्वा राजा परमदुर्मनाः ॥२१॥
विषसाद पुनर्भूयो लुलितव्याकुलेन्द्रियः । तत्र तां पतितां भूमौ शयानामतथोचिताम् ॥२२॥
प्रतप्त इव दुःखेन सोऽपश्यज्जगतीपतिः । स वृद्धस्तरुणीं भार्यां प्राणेभ्योऽपि गरीयसीम् ॥२३॥
अपापः पापसंकल्पां ददर्श धरणीतले । लतामिव विनिष्कृत्तां पतितां देवतामिव ॥२४॥
किंनरीमिव निर्धूतां च्युतामप्सरसं यथा । मायामिव परिभ्रष्टां हरिणीमिव संयताम् ॥२५॥
करेणुमिव दिग्धेन विद्धां मृगयुना वने । महागज इवारण्ये स्नेहात् परमदुःखिताम् ॥२६॥
परिमृज्य च पाणिभ्यामभिसंत्रस्तचेतनः । कामी कमलपत्राक्षीमुवाच वनितामिदम् ॥२७॥

Seized with an ardent longing (to see Śrī Rāma installed as Prince Regent), and not finding his beloved consort (in her bedroom), the king, who sought to bring delight to her (by breaking the news of Śrī Rāma's installation), called out to her and (failing to elicit response), felt disconsolate. The queen had never before missed that time (of the emperor's visit). (3—18) Nor did the king ever enter her bedchamber in a deserted condition. Then, having entered the apartment, the king inquired (of the portress) about Kaikeyī as he did on previous occasions, not knowing that the foolish lady was keen to achieve her own (selfish) end (in the shape of Bharata's installation and Śrī Rāma's exile). Filled with dismay, however, the portress with joined palms forthwith replied (as follows):—(19-20) "Highly enraged, O my lord, the queen has entered the sulking-chamber." Greatly troubled in mind (not to find Kaikeyī), the king felt all the more dejected to hear the report of the portress, his senses getting agitated and confused (by the news). Sore distressed as it were with agony, the celebrated emperor found her fallen on the floor and lying in the sulking-chamber in an unseemly manner. The sinless and aged monarch saw his young spouse, who was dearer (to him) than his (very) life and harboured a sinful resolve, lying on the ground like a creeper violently torn asunder (from the tree supporting it) or like a fallen deity or like a Kinnara woman thrust forth from heaven or like a celestial nymph dropped from heaven or like a frustrated conjuring trick or (again) like a doe caught in a snare—(even) as a lordly elephant in a forest would perceive a she-elephant lying pierced with an envenomed shaft by a hunter in the woods. Fondly stroking with his hands the lady, who possessed eyes resembling the petals of a lotus and was sore distressed, the loving king, whose mind was greatly alarmed in every way, spoke (to her) as follows :— (21—27)

न तेऽहमभिजानामि क्रोधमात्मनि संश्रितम् । देवि केनाभियुक्तासि केन वासि विमानिता ॥२८॥
यदिदं मम दुःखाय शेषे कल्याणि पांसुषु । भूमौ शेषे किमर्थं त्वं मयि कल्याणचेतसि ॥२९॥
भूतोपहतचित्तेव मम चित्तप्रमाथिनि । सन्ति मे कुशला वैद्यास्त्वभितुष्टाश्च सर्वशः ॥३०॥
सुखितां त्वां करिष्यन्ति व्याधिमाचक्ष्व भामिनि । कस्य वापि प्रियं कार्यं केन वा विप्रियं कृतम् ॥३१॥
कः प्रियं लभतामद्य को वा सुमहदप्रियम् । मा रौत्सीर्मा च कार्षीस्त्वं देवि सम्परिशोषणम् ॥३२॥
अवध्यो वध्यतां को वा वध्यः को वा विमुच्यताम् । दरिद्रः को भवेदाढ्यो द्रव्यवान् वाप्यकिंचनः ॥३३॥

"I do not suspect that your anger is directed towards me. By whom have you been rebuked or by whom have you been treated with disrespect, O glorious lady, that to my (great) agony you are rolling in this way in dust? Notwithstanding myself, whose mind is (ever) intent on your welfare, what for are you lying on the floor like one whose mind is possessed by an evil spirit, O blessed lady who are violently stirring my mind? There are skilled physicians who are in every way pleased with me (being gratified by me with presents and other favours) and will bring you relief. (Only) describe your ailment O proud lady (so that it may be effectively tackled)! Whom do you seek to oblige or by whom have you been offended? (28—31) Who should be rewarded today, or who should be awarded the severest punishment? (Pray) don't conceal what is there in your mind nor should you torment your body (by suppressing your feelings), O glorious lady! (32) What man who does not deserve to be killed may be killed or what man who deserves to be killed may be set at full liberty? What pauper may be made wealthy or what wealthy man may be reduced to penury? (33)

अहं च हि मदीयाश्च सर्वे तव वशानुगाः । न ते कंचिदभिप्रायं व्याहन्तुमहमुत्सहे ॥३४॥
आत्मनो जीवितेनापि ब्रूहि यन्मनसि स्थितम् । बलमात्मनि जानन्ती न मां शङ्कितुमर्हसि ॥३५॥
करिष्यामि तव प्रीतिं सुकृतेनापि ते शपे । यावदावर्तते चक्रं तावती मे वसुंधरा ॥३६॥
द्राविडाः सिन्धुसौवीराः सौराष्ट्रा दक्षिणापथाः । वङ्गाङ्गमगधा मत्स्याः समृद्धाः काशिकोसलाः ॥३७॥
तत्र जातं बहु द्रव्यं धनधान्यमजाविकम् । ततो वृणीष्व कैकेयि यद् यत् त्वं मनसेच्छसि ॥३८॥
किमायासेन ते भीरु उत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ शोभने ।
तत् त्वं मे ब्रूहि कैकेयि यतस्ते भयमागतम् । वत् ते व्यपनयिष्यामि नीहारमिव रश्मिवान् ॥३९॥
तथोक्ता सा समाश्वस्ता वक्तुकामा तदप्रियम् । परिपीडयितुं भूयो भर्तारमुपचक्रमे ॥४०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे दशमः सर्गः ॥ १० ॥

"Myself as well as those who are mine are indeed subject to your control. (As for myself) I dare not thwart any purpose (whatever) of yours and must achieve it even at the cost of my life. (Therefore) speak out what exists in your mind. Knowing (as you do) the strength (in the form of my love) that inheres in you, you ought not to entertain any misgiving concerning me. (34-35) I swear by the very merit earned by me (through my virtuous deeds) that I shall do what pleases you. The earth is mine so far as the orb of the sun shines on it. (36) The prosperous lands of Dravida (now known by the name of Tamilnad), Sindhusauvīra, Saurashtra, Dakṣiṇāpatha (the Deccan), Vanga (Bengal), Anga (the modern Bhagalpur), Magadha (South Bihar), Matsya (the modern Jaipur Division in Rajasthan), Kāśi (the modern Varanasi) and Kosala (Oudh) and the abundant wealth produced there in the shape of riches, foodgrains, goats and sheep etc. are (all) mine. Ask (of me), O Kaikeyī, whatever you seek out of it with your mind. (37-38) What will be gained by you through self-torture, O timid lady? Get up, rise, O fair one! Tell me, O Kaikeyī, wherefrom has fear appeared in you. I shall drive it away (even) as the sun disperses mist." (39) Feeling comforted when spoken to as aforesaid, and inclined to put up that unkind proposal, Kaikeyī made ready to torment her husband further (by putting forward that unpalatable proposal). (40)

Thus ends Canto Ten in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकादशः सर्गः

Canto XI

Egged on by Kaikeyī to grant her desire, Daśaratha gives his word of honour to her to that effect. Invoking the presence of gods as witnesses and reminding the emperor of what took place during the conflict of gods and demons, Kaikeyī asks of him the two boons promised by him in the shape of exiling Śrī Rāma for a period of fourteen years and installing Bharata as Prince Regent.

तं मन्मथशरैर्विद्धं कामवेगवशानुगम् । उवाच पृथिवीपालं कैकेयी दारुणं वचः ॥ १ ॥
नास्मि विप्रकृता देव केनचिन्नावमानिता । अभिप्रायस्तु मे कश्चित् तमिच्छामि त्वया कृतम् ॥ २ ॥
प्रतिज्ञां प्रतिजानीष्व यदि त्वं कर्तुमिच्छसि । अथ ते व्याहरिष्यामि यथाभिप्रार्थितं मया ॥ ३ ॥
तामुवाच महाराजः कैकेयीमीषदुत्स्मयः । कामी हस्तेन संगृह्य मूर्धजेषु भुवि स्थिताम् ॥ ४ ॥
अवलिप्ते न जानासि त्वत्तः प्रियतरो मम । मनुजो मनुजव्याघ्राद् रामादन्यो न विद्यते ॥ ५ ॥
तेनाजय्येन मुख्येन राघवेण महात्मना । शपे ते जीवनार्हेण ब्रूहि यन्मनसेप्सितम् ॥ ६ ॥
यं मुहूर्तमपश्यंस्तु न जीवेयमहं ध्रुवम् । तेन रामेण कैकेयि शपे ते वचनक्रियाम् ॥ ७ ॥
आत्मना चात्मजैश्चान्यैर्वृणे यं मनुजर्षभम् । तेन रामेण कैकेयि शपे ते वचनक्रियाम् ॥ ८ ॥
भद्रे हृदयमप्येतदनुमृश्योद्धरस्व माम् । एतत् समीक्ष्य कैकेयि ब्रूहि यत् साधु मन्यसे ॥ ९ ॥

To the emperor, who had been pierced with the shafts of love and was a slave to the promptings of passion, Kaikeyī addressed the following cruel reply :—(1) "I have neither been insulted nor treated with disrespect by anyone, O lord ! Of course there is some cherished object of mine; I desire it to be accomplished by you. (2) Make a solemn vow (to that effect) if you wish to accomplish it. I shall then duly tell you what is keenly sought by me." (3) Putting in order with his hands her (dishevelled) hair, lying on the ground (and placing her head on his lap), the loving emperor spoke (as follows) to Kaikeyī, gently smiling :—(4) "O proud lady, don't you know that no man other than Rāma, a (veritable) tiger among men, is dearer to me than yourself? (5) I swear to you by the said Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who is invincible and high-souled, the foremost among men and more valuable than my own life : speak out what is sought by your mind. (6) By that Rāma, without seeing whom even for an hour or so, O Kaikeyī, I am surely not going to survive, I swear that your order shall be carried out. (7) By that Rāma, the foremost among men, whom I would have even in exchange for my own self and my other sons, (Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna), I swear that your bidding will be done. (8) Realizing my mind as well to be such, O good lady, (pray) save my life (by opening your mind to me and allowing me to carry out your order). Considering this (consistency of my mind and speech), O Kaikeyī, speak out what you deem fit. (9)

बलमात्मनि पश्यन्ती न विशङ्कितुमर्हसि । करिष्यामि तव प्रीतिं सुकृतेनापि ते शपे ॥१०॥
सा तदर्थमना देवी तमभिप्रायमागतम् । निर्माध्यस्थ्याच्च हर्षाच्च बभाषे दुर्वचं वचः ॥११॥
तेन वाक्येन संहृष्टा तमभिप्रायमात्मनः । व्याजहार महाघोरमभ्यागतमिवान्तकम् ॥१२॥

"Perceiving the strength (in the form of my love) inhering in you, you ought not to harbour any misgiving (about my *bona fides*). I swear even by my virtuous acts that I shall do what pleases you." (10) Realizing that the oath which she expected to hear had come out (of the lips of her husband), her mind being set on the object sought to be achieved by her, the queen uttered something which was hard to utter (even for an enemy), prompted as she was by partiality (for her own son) and joy (born of the thought that her husband was entirely under her thumb). (11) Thrilled by that (thrice repeated) oath, she gave out (as follows) her intention, referred to above, which was most terrible—as terrible as Death standing at his door. (12)

यथा क्रमेण शपसे वरं मम ददासि च । तच्छृण्वन्तु त्रयस्त्रिंशद् देवाः सेन्द्रपुरोगमाः ॥१३॥
चन्द्रादित्यौ नभश्चैव ग्रहा रात्र्यहनी दिशः । जगच्च पृथिवी चेयं सगन्धर्वाः सराक्षसाः ॥१४॥
निशाचराणि भूतानि गृहेषु गृहदेवताः । यानि चान्यानि भूतानि जानीयुर्भाषितं तव ॥१५॥
सत्यसंधो महातेजा धर्मज्ञः सत्यवाक् शुचिः । वरं मम ददात्येष सर्वे शृण्वन्तु दैवताः ॥१६॥
इति देवी महेष्वासं परिगृह्याभिशस्य च । ततः परमुवाचेदं वरदं काममोहितम् ॥१७॥
स्मर राजन् पुरा वृत्तं तस्मिन् देवासुरे रणे । तत्र त्वां च्यावयच्छत्रुस्तव जीवितमन्तरा ॥१८॥

"Let the thirty-three (principal) gods, (*viz*, the twelve Ādityas, the eleven Rudras or gods presiding over destruction, the eight Vasus and the two Aświnīkumāras or twin-born physicians of gods) with Indra (the ruler of gods) as their leader hear the way in which you swear in (regular) succession (first by your most beloved son, Rāma, and then by your virtuous acts) and offer a boon to me. (13) (Nay) let the moon and the sun as well as the sky, the (nine) planets, day and night, the (four) quarters along with the Gandharvas and the Rākṣasas, the universe including this (terrestrial) globe, the spirits roaming about at night, the deities presiding over (individual) houses and residing in them and whatever other created beings there are (within hearing) know of your utterance (oath and boon). (14-15) Here does the highly glorious and pious emperor, who is true to his promise, knows what is right and is truthful of speech, confer a boon on me; let all gods listen !" (16) Having thus extolled and won over the monarch, who carried a mighty bow and was disposed to confer a boon on her, infatuated as he was through love, the queen (Kaikeyī) then spoke to him as follows:—(17) "Recall, O king, what happened of old in that conflict between gods and demons,—how the enemy brought you down in the course of that (nocturnal) encounter, sparing (only) your life. (18)

तत्र चापि मया देव यत् त्वं समभिरक्षितः । जाग्रत्या यतमानायास्ततो मे प्रददौ वरौ ॥१९॥
तौ दत्तौ च वरौ देव निक्षेपौ मृगयाम्यहम् । तवैव पृथिवीपाल सकाशे रघुनन्दन ॥२०॥
तत् प्रतिश्रुत्य धर्मेण न चेद् दास्यसि मे वरम् । अद्यैव हि प्रहास्यामि जीवितं त्वद्विमानिता ॥२१॥

"Since on that occasion, O lord, you were carefully protected by me on all sides, keeping awake (as I did the whole night), you thereupon conferred a couple of boons on me (even) while I was striving (to save you). (19) I seek (of you), O lord, the said two boons (already) offered (by you), O Ruler of the globe, and kept in deposit with you alone (till now), O scion of Raghu! (20) If, (even) after swearing by your virtue that you will grant them, you do not (actually) grant the boons in my favour, I shall this very day give up the ghost, feeling insulted by you." (21)

वाङ्मात्रेण तदा राजा कैकेय्या स्ववशे कृतः । प्रचस्कन्द विनाशाय पाशं मृग इवात्मनः ॥२२॥
ततः परमुवाचेदं वरदं काममोहितम् । वरौ देयौ त्वया देव तदा दत्तौ महीपते ॥२३॥
तौ तावदहमद्यैव वक्ष्यामि शृणु मे वचः । अभिषेकसमारम्भो राघवस्योपकल्पितः ॥२४॥
अनेनैवाभिषेकेण भरतो मेऽभिषिच्यताम् । यो द्वितीयो वरो देव दत्तः प्रीतेन मे त्वया ॥२५॥
तदा देवासुरे युद्धे तस्य कालोऽयमागतः । नव पञ्च च वर्षाणि दण्डकारण्यमाश्रितः ॥२६॥
चीराजिनधरो धीरो रामो भवतु तापसः । भरतो भजतामद्य यौवराज्यमकण्टकम् ॥२७॥
एष मे परमः कामो दत्तमेव वरं वृणे । अद्य चैव हि पश्येयं प्रयान्तं राघवं वने ॥२८॥
स राजराजो भव सत्यसंगरः कुलं च शीलं च हि जन्म रक्ष च ।
परत्र वासे हि वदन्त्यनुत्तमं तपोधनाः सत्यवचो हितं नृणाम् ॥२९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकादशः सर्गः ॥ ११ ॥

Brought under her thumb through mere words by Kaikeyī, the king forthwith slipped like a deer into the snare (set by her) for his own destruction. (22) Then she spoke as follows to the king, who was infatuated through love and was (accordingly) ready to grant the boons (asked by her):—"The boons offered by you then, O ruler of the earth, must be granted by you, O lord! (23) I shall just now specify them; listen to my request. Let my Bharata be installed (as Prince Regent) with the same preparations as have been made for the installation of Rāma (a scion of Raghu). The time has (also) just come for granting the second boon that was offered by you in my favour during the conflict of gods and demons the other day, pleased as you were with me. Residing in the forest of Daṇḍaka and wearing the bark of trees and deer-skin, let the strong-minded Rāma lead the life of a hermit for fourteen years and let Bharata secure the office of Prince Regent without opposition this (very) day. (24—27) This is my most cherished desire. I only ask (of you) a boon (already) granted (by you). Nay, let me behold Rāma (a scion of Raghu) proceeding to the forest this very day. (28) Noted as you are as the king of kings, be true to your promise and as such redeem your race and virtue as well as birth. Those rich in asceticism really speaking declare truthful speech as supremely conducive to the welfare of men in the other world." (29)

Thus ends Canto Eleven in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्वादशः सर्गः

Canto XII

Extolling the virtues of Śrī Rāma and showing him undeserving of exile, the emperor endeavours to dissuade Kaikeyī from her pertinacity in sending Śrī Rāma into exile. Quoting the examples of Hariśchandra and others, Kaikeyī, however, redoubles her insistence. The emperor for his part rebukes her in harsh words and goes the length of falling at her feet in order to bring her round but in vain.

ततः श्रुत्वा महाराजः कैकेय्या दारुणं वचः । चिन्तामभिसमापेदे मुहूर्तं प्रतताप च ॥ १ ॥
किं नु मेऽयं दिवास्वप्नश्चित्तमोहोऽपि वा मम । अनुभूतोपसर्गो वा मनसो वाप्युपद्रवः ॥ २ ॥
इति संचिन्त्य तद् राजा नाध्यगच्छत् तदासुखम् । प्रतिलभ्य ततः संज्ञां कैकेयीवाक्यतापितः ॥ ३ ॥
व्यथितो विक्लवश्चैव व्याघ्रीं दृष्ट्वा यथा मृगः । असंवृतायामासीनो जगत्यां दीर्घमुच्छ्वसन् ॥ ४ ॥
मण्डले पन्नगो रुद्धो मन्त्रैरिव महाविषः । अहो धिगिति सामर्षो वाचमुक्त्वा नराधिपः ॥ ५ ॥
मोहमापेदिवान् भूयः शोकोपहतचेतनः । चिरेण तु नृपः संज्ञां प्रतिलभ्य सुदुःखितः ॥ ६ ॥
कैकेयीमब्रवीत् क्रुद्धो निर्दहन्निव तेजसा ।

On hearing the cruel request of Kaikeyī, the emperor thereupon fell a prey to anxiety and suffered great agony awhile. (1) (He said to himself,) "Can it possibly be a day-dream on my part or could it be a confusion of my mind? Or could it be a vivid mental picture of things experienced (in a previous birth) or a disturbance of the mind?" (2) Reflecting thus, the king could not make out on the spur of the moment what it was; (on the other hand) he experienced (great) agony (causing him to swoon). Then, regaining consciousness, he felt tormented (once more) by (the memory of) Kaikeyī's words. (3) Distressed and uneasy as a deer at the sight of a lioness and seated on the bare floor he began to sigh like a highly venomous serpent fixed to a charmed spot through magic spells. Uttering the remark "Oh, what a pity!" the indignant king fell into a swoon once more, his mind infatuated with grief. Regaining consciousness after a long time and feeling greatly distressed and enraged, the monarch spoke to Kaikeyī (as follows) as though consuming her with his glow:—

नृशंसे दुष्टचारित्रे कुलस्यास्य विनाशिनि ॥ ७ ॥
किं कृतं तव रामेण पापे पापं मयापि वा । सदा ते जननीतुल्यां वृत्तिं वहति राघवः ॥ ८ ॥
तस्यैवं त्वमनर्थाय किंनिमित्तमिहोद्यता । त्वं मयाऽऽत्मविनाशाय भवनं स्वं निवेशिता ॥ ९ ॥
अविज्ञानान्नृपसुता व्याला तीक्ष्णविषा यथा । जीवलोको यदा सर्वो रामस्याह गुणस्तवम् ॥ १० ॥
अपराधं कमुद्दिश्य त्यक्ष्यामीष्टमहं सुतम् । कौसल्यां च सुमित्रां च त्यजेयमपि वा श्रियम् ॥ ११ ॥
जीवितं चात्मनो रामं न त्वेव पितृवत्सलम् । परा भवति मे प्रीतिर्दृष्ट्वा तनयमग्रजम् ॥ १२ ॥

अपश्यतस्तु मे रामं नष्टं भवति चेतनम् । तिष्ठेल्लोको विना सूर्यं सस्यं वा सलिलं विना ॥१३॥
न तु रामं विना देहे तिष्ठेत्तु मम जीवितम् । तदलं त्यज्यतामेष निश्चयः पापनिश्चये ॥१४॥
अपि ते चरणौ मूर्ध्ना स्पृशाम्येष प्रसीद मे । किमर्थं चिन्तितं पापे त्वया परमदारुणम् ॥१५॥

"O cruel woman of wicked conduct, bent upon exterminating this race, what wrong has been done to you, O wretch, by Rāma or even by me? Rāma (a scion of Raghu) always serves you in the same way as he does his own mother. (4—8) Wherefore (then) are you bent in this way upon bringing ruination to such a one at this juncture? (Surely) you have been unwittingly lodged in my house for my own destruction even as one would lodge a highly venomous female serpent knowing it to be a princess. When the entire living creation extols the virtues of Rāma, for what offence shall I forsake my beloved son? Nay, I can (if need be) forsake (my other two wives) Kausalyā and Sumitrā or even my (royal) fortune, nay, my (very) life, but I would on no account part with Rāma, who is (so) fond of his father. Supreme is my delight on seeing my eldest son; while my (very) consciousness is lost if I fail to see Rāma. The world may continue to exist without the sun or a crop may live without water; life, however, cannot in any case continue in my body without Rāma. Therefore, have done with it. Let this resolution be given up, O lady with a sinful resolve! (9—14) I even hereby touch your feet with my head (as a token of submission); be gracious to me. What for has this most cruel design been conceived by you, O sinful woman? (15)

अथ जिज्ञाससे मां त्वं भरतस्य प्रियाप्रिये । अस्तु यत्तत्त्वया पूर्वं व्याहृतं राघवं प्रति ॥१६॥
स मे ज्येष्ठसुतः श्रीमान् धर्मज्येष्ठ इतीव मे । तत त्वया प्रियवादिन्या सेवार्थं कथितं भवेत् ॥१७॥
तच्छ्रुत्वा शोकसंतप्ता संतापयसि मां भृशम् । आविष्टासि गृहे शून्ये सा त्वं परवशं गता ॥१८॥
इक्ष्वाकूणां कुले देवि सम्प्राप्तः सुमहानयम् । अनयो नयसम्पन्ने यत्र ते विकृता मतिः ॥१९॥
नहि किंचिदयुक्तं वा विप्रियं वा पुरा मम । अकरोस्त्वं विशालाक्षि तेन न श्रद्दधामि ते ॥२०॥
ननु ते राघवस्तुल्यो भरतेन महात्मना । बहुशो हि स्म बाले त्वं कथाः कथयसे मम ॥२१॥
तस्य धर्मात्मनो देवि वने वासं यशस्विनः । कथं रोचयसे भीरु नव वर्षाणि पञ्च च ॥२२॥
अत्यन्तसुकुमारस्य तस्य धर्मे कृतात्मनः । कथं रोचयसे वासमरण्ये भृशदारुणे ॥२३॥
रोचयस्यभिरामस्य रामस्य शुभलोचने । तव शुश्रूषमाणस्य किमर्थं विप्रवासनम् ॥२४॥

"If (however) you wish to ascertain my kindly or unkindly feeling towards Bharata, let that which was recommended by you first in connection with Bharata (a scion of Raghu), come into effect (let him be forthwith installed as Prince Regent instead of Rāma). (16) The observation (so often) made by you that the glorious Rāma, who is senior in the practice of virtue (too) is my eldest son as it were, must have been uttered in order to coax me or to exact (some) service from him. (17) Afflicted with grief to hear of his (projected) installation, you are severely tormenting me (too). Possessed by an evil spirit in a lonely house, you are subject to the control of another, though same as before. (18) This very great misfortune, O queen, has visited the race of the Ikṣwākus, rich in righteous conduct, due to which your mind has been (thus) perverted. (19) You did nothing unreasonable or repugnant to me in the past, O large-eyed one! Therefore I do not believe what has been done by you (today, which I presume is the doing of some malignant spirit). (20) Indeed Rāma (a scion of Raghu) is on a par with the high-souled Bharata to you; for many times have you told me stories illustrating this, O young lady! (21) How have you come to view with favour the banishment for nine years and five of that pious-minded and illustrious Rāma, O glorious yet timid lady? (22) How have you come to view with favour the sojourn in a most dreadful forest of Rāma, who is extremely delicate of body and has given his mind to piety? (23) What for do you view with favour the exile, O fair-eyed lady, of Rāma, who is so pleasing (to look at) and is devoted to your service? (24)

रामो हि भरताद् भूयस्तव शुश्रूषते सदा । विशेषं त्वयि तस्मात् तु भरतस्य न लक्षये ॥२५॥
शुश्रूषां गौरवं चैव प्रमाणं वचनक्रियाम् । कस्तु भूयस्तरं कुर्यादन्यत्र पुरुषर्षभात् ॥२६॥
बहूनां स्त्रीसहस्राणां बहूनां चोपजीविनाम् । परिवादोऽपवादो वा राघवे नोपपद्यते ॥२७॥
सान्त्वयन् सर्वभूतानि रामः शुद्धेन चेतसा । गृह्णाति मनुजव्याघ्रः प्रियैर्विषयवासिनः ॥२८॥
सत्त्वेन लोकाञ्जयति द्विजान् दानेन राघवः । गुरूञ्छुश्रूषया वीरो धनुषा युधि शात्रवान् ॥२९॥
सत्यं दानं तपस्त्यागो मित्रता शौचमार्जवम् । विद्या च गुरुशुश्रूषा ध्रुवाण्येतानि राघवे ॥३०॥
तस्मिन्नार्जवसम्पन्ने देवि देवोपमे कथम् । पापमाशंससे रामे महर्षिसमतेजसि ॥३१॥
न स्मराम्यप्रियं वाक्यं लोकस्य प्रियवादिना । स कथं त्वत्कृते रामं वक्ष्यामि प्रियमप्रियम् ॥३२॥
क्षमा यस्मिंस्तपस्त्यागः सत्यं धर्मः कृतज्ञता । अप्यहिंसा च भूतानां तमृते का गतिर्मम ॥३३॥
मम वृद्धस्य कैकेयि गतान्तस्य तपस्विनः । दीनं लालप्यमानस्य कारुण्यं कर्तुमर्हसि ॥३४॥
पृथिव्यां सागरान्तायां यत् किंचिदधिगम्यते । तत् सर्वं तव दास्यामि मा च त्वं मृत्युमाविश ॥३५॥
अञ्जलिं कुर्मि कैकेयि पादौ चापि स्पृशामि ते । शरणं भव रामस्य माधर्मो मामिह स्पृशेत् ॥३६॥
इति दुःखाभिसंतप्तं विलपन्तमचेतनम् । घूर्णमानं महाराजं शोकेन समभिप्लुतम् ॥३७॥
पारं शोकार्णवस्याशु प्रार्थयन्तं पुनः पुनः । प्रत्युवाचाथ कैकेयी रौद्रा रौद्रतरं वचः ॥३८॥

"Rāma, really speaking, ever serves you more than Bharata does. In reality I do not perceive in Bharata any superiority to Rāma in his attitude towards you. (25) In fact, who else than Rāma (the foremost among men) could do greater service, show greater respect, honour the words of his superiors better and do their bidding with greater alacrity? (26) No censure or calumny against Rāma has been heard from the mouth of (any of) the many thousands of women (in my gynaeceum) and numerous dependants (maintained by me). (27) Reassuring all created beings (mankind) with a guileless mind, Rāma, a tiger among men, wins over the people of his kingdom through obligations (of various kinds). (28) The valiant Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) conquers men by his virtue, the Brahmans (*lit.*, the twice-born) through charity, the elders through service and his enemies on the battle-field with his bow. (29) Truthfulness, charity, asceticism, self-abnegation, goodwill, purity (of body and mind), straightforwardness, learning and service to his elders—these are constantly present in Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (30) How do you wish harm, O queen, to that Rāma who is rich in guilelessness, is godlike (in appearance as well as in disposition) and glorious as eminent Ṛṣis. (31) I do not remember an unkind word spoken (to anybody) by Rāma, who (ever) speaks kind words to all. As such how shall I for your sake break an unpalatable news to dear Rāma ? (32) What asylum is there for me other than Rāma, in whom there exist forgiveness, asceticism, self-denial, truthfulness, piety, gratitude as well as harmlessness towards created beings ? (33) O Kaikeyī, you ought to show mercy to me, an old and miserable man who has reached his end and is making piteous entreaties to you again and again. (34) Whatever can be had on the globe girdled by the ocean, I shall bestow all that on you. But head you not towards a situation ending in death (to me). (35) I join my palms (before you), O Kaikeyī, and also touch your feet. Be a protector to Rāma and let not unrighteousness (born of my failure to keep my word) lay hold on me in this life." (36) To the emperor,—who was sore distressed with agony and was wailing as aforesaid, (nay) who had fallen unconscious and was (helplessly) tossing about, overwhelmed as he was with grief, and was praying again and again for being speedily borne across the sea of grief,—the fierce Kaikeyī gave the following fiercer reply :— (37-38)

यदि दत्त्वा वरौ राजन् पुनः प्रत्यनुतप्यसे । धार्मिकत्वं कथं वीर पृथिव्यां कथयिष्यसि ॥३९॥
यदा समेता बहवस्त्वया राजर्षयः सह । कथयिष्यन्ति धर्मज्ञ तत्र किं प्रतिवक्ष्यसि ॥४०॥
यस्याः प्रसादे जीवामि या च मामभ्यपालयत् । तस्याः कृता मया मिथ्या कैकेय्या इति वक्ष्यसि ॥४१॥
किल्बिषं त्वं नरेन्द्राणां करिष्यसि नराधिप । यो दत्त्वा वरमद्यैव पुनरन्यानि भाषसे ॥४२॥
शैब्यः श्येनकपोतीये स्वमांसं पक्षिणे ददौ । अलर्कश्चक्षुषी दत्त्वा जगाम गतिमुत्तमाम् ॥४३॥
सागरः समयं कृत्वा न वेलामतिवर्तते । समयं मानृतं कार्षीः पूर्ववृत्तमनुस्मरन् ॥४४॥
स त्वं धर्मं परित्यज्य रामं राज्येऽभिषिच्य च । सह कौसल्यया नित्यं रन्तुमिच्छसि दुर्मते ॥४५॥
भवत्वधर्मो धर्मो वा सत्यं वा यदि वानृतम् । यत्त्वया संश्रुतं मह्यं तस्य नास्ति व्यतिक्रमः ॥४६॥
अहं हि विषमद्यैव पीत्वा बहु तवाग्रतः । पश्यतस्ते मरिष्यामि रामो यद्यभिषिच्यते ॥४७॥
एकाहमपि पश्येयं यद्यहं राममातरम् । अञ्जलिं प्रतिगृह्णन्तीं श्रेयो ननु मृतिर्मम ॥४८॥
भरतेनात्मना चाहं शपे ते मनुजाधिप । यथा नान्येन तुष्येयमृते रामविवासनात् ॥४९॥

"If, having (once) granted a couple of boons (to me), you now repent, how will you (be able to) proclaim your piety any more on earth, O valiant king ? (39) When many an assembled royal sage hold converse with you (about the boons granted by you to me), O knower of what is right, what reply will you make to their question ? (40) Will you (then) admit that the promise made by you (to grant the two boons already offered by you) to Kaikeyī,—by whose grace you survive and who protected you (against the enemies by driving your chariot and removing you from the battle-field and nursing you),—has been broken by you ? (41) You, who having granted boons this very day, O ruler of men, now say contrary things shall bring a stigma on (other) kings (of your own race). (42) In the course of a dispute between a hawk and a dove (who were no other than Indra, the ruler of gods, and the god of fire respectively) the ruler of the Śibis* gave away his own flesh to the bird (which would not be satisfied otherwise); and, parting with his own eyes, King Alarka† attained to the highest destiny. (43) Having given his word of honour (to the gods at their entreaty), Ocean never transgresses his limits. (Therefore) bearing in mind the conduct of your forbears, do not violate the pledge (given by you to me). (44) (Now I understand that) forswearing righteousness and installing Rāma on the throne (of Ayodhya) you seek to enjoy life with Kausalyā eternally, O foolish king! (45) Whether that which has been promised by you to me is unrighteous or righteous, and whether the promise has been made in good faith or it is a (mere) hoax, there is no going back on it. (46) If Rāma is installed (as Prince Regent) I shall positively die this very day before your eyes, drinking copious poison in your presence. (47) If I behold Kausalyā accepting greetings with joined palms (from the people of Ayodhya as the Prince Regent's own mother) even for a single day, death will be surely preferable to me (than such an eyesore). (48) I swear to you by Bharata as well as by my own self that I am not going to be satisfied by anything else than the banishment of Rāma." (49)

---

* We are told in our scriptures how in order to put the large-heartedness of the king to a test Indra (the ruler of gods) and Agni (the god of fire) once appeared in his court in the disguise of a hawk and a dove. Being chased by the hawk, the dove, which sought the king's protection, descended into his lap. The hawk, which closely followed it, demanded it back from the king, contending that the bird had been allotted to it as

एतावदुक्त्वा वचनं कैकेयी विरराम ह । विलपन्तं च राजानं न प्रतिव्याजहार सा ॥५०॥
श्रुत्वा तु राजा कैकेय्या वाक्यं परमशोभनम् । रामस्य च वने वासमैश्वर्यं भरतस्य च ॥५१॥
नाभ्यभाषत कैकेयीं मुहूर्तं व्याकुलेन्द्रियः । प्रैक्षतानिमिषो देवीं प्रियामप्रियवादिनीम् ॥५२॥
तां हि वज्रसमां वाचमाकर्ण्य हृदयाप्रियाम् । दुःखशोकमयीं घोरां राजा न सुखितोऽभवत् ॥५३॥
सा देव्या व्यवसायं च घोरं च शपथं कृतम् । ध्यात्वा रामेति निःश्वस्यच्छिन्नस्तरुरिवापतत् ॥५४॥
नष्टचित्तो यथोन्मत्तो विपरीतो यथाऽऽतुरः । हृततेजा यथा सर्पो बभूव जगतीपतिः ॥५५॥
दीनयाऽऽतुरया वाचा इति होवाच कैकयीम् । अनर्थमिममर्थाभं केन त्वमुपदेशिता ॥५६॥
भूतोपहतचित्तेव ब्रुवन्ती मां न लज्जसे । शीलव्यसनमेतत् ते नाभिजानाम्यहं पुरा ॥५७॥
बालायास्तत् त्विदानीं ते लक्षये विपरीतवत् ।

Having uttered this threat, Kaikeyī became silent; so the tradition goes. She made no reply whatsoever to the wailing monarch. (50) Perturbed in mind to hear the most unwelcome proposal of Kaikeyī, demanding the exile of Rāma to the forest and the sovereignty of Bharata, the king for his part did not open his lips before Kaikeyī for a while; he kept gazing with unwinking eyes on his beloved queen, who uttered (such) unpleasant words. (51-52) The king did not rejoice to hear that terrible proposal, which was (so) unwelcome to the heart, inspiring as it did agony and grief, and (therefore) resembling the thunderbolt. (53) Reflecting on the queen's (firm) resolve (to see Rāma exiled to the forest and Bharata installed as Prince Regent) and the terrible oath taken by him and heaving a sigh (of despair), he dropped (to the ground) like a felled tree, uttering the name of Rāma. (54) Having lost his mental equilibrium like a madman, and getting upset like an ailing man,

---

its food by Providence and that the king had no right to rob it of its quarry. The king, however, was not prepared to forsake the fugitive on any account and agreed to part with his own flesh in order to indemnify the hawk. The hawk, however, outweighed the king's flesh every time he chopped it from his body till at last he ascended the scale himself and thus offered himself in exchange for the dove.

† The royal sage Alarka parted with his own eyes in order to implement a boon granted by him to a blind Brahman who asked for the king's eyes in order to have his own eyesight restored.

the emperor lay motionless like a hypnotized serpent. (55) In an afflicted and impatient tone, they say, he spoke to Kaikeyī as follows:—"By whom have you been taught to pursue this evil, which appears (to you) as worth striving for? (56) Like a woman whose mind has been perverted by some evil spirit, you do not feel ashamed to speak (in such an outspoken way) to me. I did not know before that seemliness of behaviour has altogether taken leave of you. I really find your conduct at the present moment contrary as it were to what it was when you were young.

कुतो वा ते भयं जातं या त्वमेवंविधं वरम् ॥५८॥
राष्ट्रे भरतमासीनं वृणीषे राघवं वने । विरमैतेन भावेन त्वमेतेनानृतेन च ॥५९॥
यदि भर्तुः प्रियं कार्यं लोकस्य भरतस्य च । नृशंसे पापसंकल्पे क्षुद्रे दुष्कृतकारिणि ॥६०॥
किं नु दुःखमलीकं वा मयि रामे च पश्यसि । न कथंचिदृते रामाद् भरतो राज्यमावसेत् ॥६१॥
रामादपि हि तं मन्ये धर्मतो बलवत्तरम् । कथं द्रक्ष्यामि रामस्य वनं गच्छेति भाषिते ॥६२॥
मुखवर्णं विवर्णं तु यथैवेन्दुमुपप्लुतम् । तां तु मे सुकृतां बुद्धिं सुहृद्भिः सह निश्चिताम् ॥६३॥
कथं द्रक्ष्याम्यपावृत्तां परैरिव हतां चमूम् । किं मां वक्ष्यन्ति राजानो नानादिग्भ्यः समागताः॥६४॥
बालो बतायमैक्ष्वाकश्चिरं राज्यमकारयत् । यदा हि बहवो वृद्धा गुणवन्तो बहुश्रुताः ॥६५॥
परिप्रक्ष्यन्ति काकुत्स्थं वक्ष्यामीह कथं तदा । कैकेय्या क्लिश्यमानेन पुत्रः प्रव्राजितो मया ॥६६॥

"From what circumstance for that matter has fear cropped up in you, who actually seek (of me) such a boon, *viz*, to see Bharata seated on the throne and Rāma (a scion of Raghu) settled in the forest. (Therefore) have done with this (hostile) attitude as well with this groundless apprehension (towards Rāma) if a kindly act is sought to be done by you to your husband (*i. e.*, myself) and the world (at large) as well as to Bharata, O cruel, petty-minded woman of sinful resolve and wicked deed! (57—60) What grievance can you possibly have against Rāma and myself or what offence do you find have we done against you? Without Rāma Bharata will in no case dwell in the kingdom (of Ayodhya, much less rule over it); for I consider Bharata stronger in virtue even than Rāma. How when the words 'Proceed to the forest!' have been uttered (by me), shall I behold even once the pallor of Rāma's face resembling in every way the eclipsed moon? How shall I bear to see my aforesaid scheme (of installing Śrī Rāma as Prince Regent), which was not only well-designed but finalized in consultation with my well-wishers, foiled like an army destroyed by enemies? The kings assembled from various quarters will say of me, 'Alas, how did this foolish scion of Ikṣwāku rule for (such) a long time?' When many qualified and highly learned elderly men actually inquire of me about Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), how shall I then tell them that the boy has been exiled by me, hard pressed as I was by Kaikeyī (yourself)? (61—66)

यदि सत्यं ब्रवीम्येतत् तदसत्यं भविष्यति । किं मां वक्ष्यति कौसल्या राघवे वनमास्थिते ॥६७॥
किं चैनां प्रतिवक्ष्यामि कृत्वा विप्रियमीदृशम् । यदा यदा च कौसल्या दासीव च सखीव च ॥६८॥
भार्यावद् भगिनीवच्च मातृवच्चोपतिष्ठति । सततं प्रियकामा मे प्रियपुत्रा प्रियंवदा ॥६९॥
न मया सत्कृता देवी सत्कारार्हा कृते तव । इदानीं तत्तपति मां यन्मया सुकृतं त्वयि ॥७०॥
अपथ्यव्यञ्जनोपेतं भुक्तमन्नमिवातुरम् । विप्रकारं च रामस्य सम्प्रयाणं वनस्य च ॥७१॥
सुमित्रा प्रेक्ष्य वै भीता कथं मे विश्वसिष्यति ।

"If I plead (in support of my action) that this has been done to vindicate the cause of truth (inasmuch as I did so only to redeem the promise made to you), my (latest) announcement (made in public to the effect that Rāma would be installed as Prince Regent the following day) would be falsified. What will Kausalyā say to me when Rāma (a scion of Raghu) proceeds to the forest? And having done such an unkind act (to her) what reply shall I make to her (inquiry in this behalf)? Nay, whenever Kausalyā—who has always sought to please me and speaks kind words to me and who has given birth to my pet son and deserves to be kindly treated by me—waited on me like a maid-servant (in rendering personal service to me) and a friend (in tendering salutary advice as well as in sport), like a better half (while assisting me in the performance of sacred duties) and a sister (while procuring me other wives) as well as like a mother (while serving up dinner), the godly lady was never kindly treated by me for fear of (displeasing) you. The good behaviour which was shown by me towards you (at that time) stings me now even as food taken with unwholesome sauces fills an ailing person with remorse. Filled with apprehension (about her own sons, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna) to perceive the ignominy shown to Rāma (by withholding the office of Prince Regent from him) as well as his exile to the forest, how will Sumitrā put faith in me any longer?

कृपणं बत वैदेही श्रोष्यति द्वयमप्रियम् ॥७२॥
मां च पञ्चत्वमापन्नं रामं च वनमाश्रितम् । वैदेही बत मे प्राणाञ्शोचन्ती क्षपयिष्यति ॥७३॥
हीना हिमवतः पार्श्वे किंनरेणेव किंनरी । नहि राममहं दृष्ट्वा प्रवसन्तं महावने ॥७४॥
चिरं जीवितुमाशंसे रुदन्तीं चापि मैथिलीम् । सा नूनं विधवा राज्यं सपुत्रा कारयिष्यसि ॥७५॥
सतीं त्वामहमत्यन्तं व्यवस्याम्यसतीं सतीम् । रूपिणीं विषसंयुक्तां पीत्वेव मदिरां नरः ॥७६॥
अनृतैर्बत मां सान्त्वैः सान्त्वयन्ती स्म भाषसे । गीतशब्देन संरुध्य लुब्धो मृगमिवावधीः ॥७७॥
अनार्य इति मामार्याः पुत्रविक्रायकं ध्रुवम् । विकरिष्यन्ति रथ्यासु सुरापं ब्राह्मणं यथा ॥७८॥

"Alas! With (great) agony will Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory) hear (simultaneously) of two unwelcome incidents *viz*, of me having met my end and of Rāma having retired to the forest. Alas, like a Kinnara girl bereft of her partner in a flank of the Himalayan range, Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory) will spend her life lamenting about me (as well as about her husband). Seeing Rāma living as an exile in a great forest and Sītā (daughter of the king of Mithilā) too weeping (due to separation from her spouse) I would under no circumstance survive long. Deprived of your husband, you will as such undoubtedly carry on the administration with your son (as the undisputed king). (67—75) I look upon you, a devoted and comely wife as you are, as (ultimately) proving to be most disloyal, (even) as one, having drunk wine mixed with poison, though possessing a charming appearance, (ultimately) concludes it to be noxious. (76) Alas! Though you have been talking with me (as a friend), coaxing me with empty blandishments, you have (actually) killed me (even) as a hunter kills a deer after enticing it with melodious sound. (77) Worthy men in the streets will surely stigmatize me, who am going to barter away my (pet) son (for the pleasure of my wife), as an ignoble man, (even) as they revile a Brahman drinking wine. (78)

अहो दुःखमहो कृच्छ्रं यत्र वाचः क्षमे तव । दुःखमेवंविधं प्राप्तं पुरा कृतमिवाशुभम् ॥७९॥
चिरं खलु मया पापे त्वं पापेनाभिरक्षिता । अज्ञानादुपसम्पन्ना रज्जुरुद्बन्धनी यथा ॥८०॥
रममाणस्त्वया सार्धं मृत्युं त्वां नाभिलक्षये । बालो रहसि हस्तेन कृष्णसर्पमिवास्पृशम् ॥८१॥
तं तु मां जीवलोकोऽयं नूनमाक्रोष्टुमर्हति । मया ह्यपितृकः पुत्रः स महात्मा दुरात्मना ॥८२॥
बालिशो बत कामात्मा राजा दशरथो भृशम् । स्त्रीकृते यः प्रियं पुत्रं वनं प्रस्थापयिष्यति ॥८३॥
वेदैश्च ब्रह्मचर्यैश्च गुरुभिश्चोपकर्शितः । भोगकाले महत् कृच्छ्रं पुनरेव प्रपत्स्यते ॥८४॥
नालं द्वितीयं वचनं पुत्रो मां प्रतिभाषितुम् । स वनं प्रव्रजेत्युक्तो बाढमित्येव वक्ष्यति ॥८५॥
यदि मे राघवः कुर्याद् वनं गच्छेति चोदितः । प्रतिकूलं प्रियं मे स्यान्न तु वत्सः करिष्यति ॥८६॥

"How distressing, oh, how painful it is (for me) that I have to put up with your (harsh) words! Such suffering has (evidently) been reaped (by me) as an evil consequence earned in a previous life. (79) Like a halter placed round one's neck through ignorance, O wicked woman, you have been lovingly maintained by me, sinful as I am. (80) Enjoying life with you, I did not perceive you to be the cause of my death. I have embraced you in retirement (even) as an infant would handle a black cobra in a solitary place. (81) This world of living beings is surely fit to revile me, such as I am, saying that that high-souled boy (of mine) has actually been deprived of his fatherly protection by me, evil-minded as I am, and making the following (further) observation:—'Alas! Extremely foolish is King Daśaratha, whose mind is given to concupiscence and who has exiled to the forest his favourite son for the sake of (pleasing) his wife!' (82-83) Emaciated (prior to his wedding) through a study of the Vedas and privations entailed by (the vow of) religious study as well as through service rendered to his preceptors, Rāma will indeed (even) during his period of enjoyment undergo again great hardship (in his forest life). (84) My (noble) son (Rāma) is incapable of addressing a word of protest to me. Commanded in the words 'Go into exile to the forest,' he will only say, 'Be it so!' (85) Should Rāma (a scion of Raghu) do the contrary when commanded in the words 'Proceed to the forest!', it would be welcome to me. My darling, however, would never do so. (86)

राघवे हि वनं प्राप्ते सर्वलोकस्य धिक्कृतम् । मृत्युरक्षमणीयं मां नयिष्यति यमक्षयम् ॥८७॥
मृते मयि गते रामे वनं मनुजपुंगवे । इष्टे मम जने शेषे किं पापं प्रतिपत्स्यसे ॥८८॥
कौसल्या मां च रामं च पुत्रौ च यदि हास्यति । दुःखान्यसहती देवी मामेवानुगमिष्यति ॥८९॥
कौसल्यां च सुमित्रां च मां च पुत्रैस्त्रिभिः सह । प्रक्षिप्य नरके सा त्वं कैकेयी सुखिता भव ॥९०॥
मया रामेण च त्यक्तं शाश्वतं सत्कृतं गुणैः । इक्ष्वाकुकुलमक्षोभ्यमाकुलं पालयिष्यसि ॥९१॥
प्रियं चेद् भरतस्यैतद् रामप्रव्राजनं भवेत् । मा स्म मे भरतः कार्षीत् प्रेतकृत्यं गतायुषः ॥९२॥
मृते मयि गते रामे वनं पुरुषपुंगवे । सेदानीं विधवा राज्यं सपुत्रा कारयिष्यसि ॥९३॥

"On Rāma (a scion of Raghu) having repaired to the forest, Death will take me, hooted by all men and unpardonable (in their eyes), to the abode of Yama (the god of punishment). (87) Myself having joined the majority when Rāma, the foremost among men, has proceeded to the forest, what (inconceivable) wrong will you inflict on the remaining people (so) beloved of me? (88) If Kausalyā (my seniormost queen) will miss me as well as Rāma as also her two (other) sons (Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna, the former of whom is sure to follow Rāma to the forest and the latter will meet the same fate as Rāma), the godlike lady, unable to endure the woes, will follow me (to the abode of Yama). (And Sumitrā will also follow suit). (89) Having thus thrown into hellish tortures Kausalyā and Sumitrā as well as myself along with our three sons, be you, the notorious daughter of the king of the Kekayas, happy! (90) You (alone) will (then) take care of Ikṣwāku's everlasting race, which, though adorned with (manifold) virtues, and incapable of being harassed will be abandoned by Rāma as well as by myself and will (as such) be mentally disturbed. (91) In case this banishment of Rāma proves agreeable to Bharata, let not Bharata perform my obsequies when my life has departed. (92) When I have joined the majority consequent on Rāma, the foremost of men, having proceeded to the forest, you, a widow, notorious as you will be (for your act of exiling Rāma), will then rule over the kingdom with your son. (93)

त्वं राजपुत्रि दैवेन न्यवसो मम वेश्मनि । अकीर्तिश्चातुला लोके ध्रुवः परिभवश्च मे ।
सर्वभूतेषु चावज्ञा यथा पापकृतस्तथा ॥९४॥
कथं रथैर्विभुर्यात्वा गजाश्वैश्च मुहुर्मुहुः । पद्भ्यां रामो महारण्ये वत्सो मे विचरिष्यति ॥९५॥
यस्य चाहारसमये सूदाः कुण्डलधारिणः । अहंपूर्वाः पचन्ति स्म प्रसन्नाः पानभोजनम् ॥९६॥
स कथं नु कषायाणि तिक्तानि कटुकानि च । भक्षयन् वन्यमाहारं सुतो मे वर्तयिष्यति ॥९७॥
महार्हवस्त्रसम्बद्धो भूत्वा चिरसुखोचितः । काषायपरिधानस्तु कथं रामो भविष्यति ॥९८॥
कस्येदं दारुणं वाक्यमेवंविधमपीरितम् । रामस्यारण्यगमनं भरतस्याभिषेचनम् ॥९९॥
धिगस्तु योषितो नाम शठाः स्वार्थपरायणाः । न ब्रवीमि स्त्रियः सर्वा भरतस्यैव मातरम् ॥१००॥
अनर्थभावेऽर्थपरे नृशंसे ममानुतापाय निवेशितासि ।
किमप्रियं पश्यसि मन्निमित्तं हितानुकारिण्यथवापि रामे ॥१०१॥

"Through ill luck (of mine), O princess (of Kekaya), you took up your abode in my palace. (That is why) ill repute which is unmatched in the world and lasting reproach as well as the scorn of all men will fall to my share as to a perpetrator of sinful deeds. (94) How, having driven on chariots and ridden on elephants and horses on every occasion (he was required to move, will my darling, the powerful Rāma roam about in an extensive forest on foot? (95) How will my son—at whose dinner time cooks wearing (gold and bejewelled) ear-rings and full of delight used to prepare food and drinks (of various kinds) trying to finish their work before others—actually sustain his life living on alkaline, bitter and pungent fruits as well as on (other) wild edibles (such as bulbs and roots)? (96-97) How, having been clad in costly robes, will Rāma, who is deserving of lasting comforts, wear ochre-coloured garments? (98) At whose instance has such a cruel proposal as the one demanding the exile of Rāma into the forest and the installation of Bharata (as Prince Regent) been put forward (by you)? (99) Woe unto womankind, who are malignant (by nature) and whose supreme concern is to advance their own (selfish) interests! I do not speak of all women, but of Bharata's mother alone. (100) O cruel woman of evil intent, given to the pursuit of your selfish ends, you have been lodged in my house (by Providence) for causing affliction to me. What mischief do you expect through me or through Rāma, who has repeatedly been doing good to you? (101)

परित्यजेयुः पितरोऽपि पुत्रान् भार्याः पतींश्चापि कृतानुरागाः ।
कृत्स्नं हि सर्वं कुपितं जगत् स्याद् दृष्ट्वैव रामं व्यसने निमग्नम् ॥१०२॥
अहं पुनर्देवकुमाररूपमलंकृतं तं सुतमाव्रजन्तम् ।
नन्दामि पश्यन्निव दर्शनेन भवामि दृष्ट्वैव पुनर्युवेव ॥१०३॥
विना हि सूर्येण भवेत् प्रवृत्तिरवर्षता वज्रधरेण वापि ।
रामं तु गच्छन्तमितः समीक्ष्य जीवेन्न कश्चित् त्विति चेतना मे ॥१०४॥
विनाशकामामहिताममित्रामावासयं मृत्युमिवात्मनस्त्वाम् ।
चिरं बताङ्केन धृतासि सर्पी महाविषा तेन हतोऽस्मि मोहात् ॥१०५॥
मया च रामेण सलक्ष्मणेन प्रशास्तु हीनो भरतस्त्वया सह ।
पुरं च राष्ट्रं च निहत्य बान्धवान् ममाहितानां च भवाभिहर्षिणी ॥१०६॥

"Even fathers, who have bestowed their love on Rāma, are sure to abandon sons (in order to be able to follow Rāma in his exile) and wives too their husbands and everything (else); nay, the whole world will get exasperated at the very sight of Rāma plunged in adversity (in the shape of banishment). (102) I for my part rejoice when I behold with my (own) eyes that son of mine, possessing the comeliness of a divine boy and adorned with ornaments, coming (to me) and feel rejuvenated as it were the moment I see him. (103) Active life may be possible even without the sun or even with Indra (the wielder of the thunderbolt) not pouring showers. None (in the capital), however, can survive on perceiving Rāma departing from Ayodhya (to the woods): such is my conviction indeed. (10) I lodged in my house, as one would one's own mortal enemy, you, who seek my life and are not only unfriendly but (positively) hostile to me. Alas! through ignorance in your person a highly venomous female serpent has been embraced so long (by me) and therefore I am undone. (105) Devoid of me as also of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, let Bharata along with you rule over the city as well as the state. Having got rid of your relations (husband and stepsons) bring joy to my enemies. (106)

नृशंसवृत्ते व्यसनप्रहारिणि प्रसह्य वाक्यं यदिहाद्य भाषसे ।
न नाम ते तेन मुखात् पतन्त्यधो विशीर्यमाणा दशनाः सहस्रधा ॥१०७॥
न किंचिदाहाहितमप्रियं वचो न वेत्ति रामः परुषाणि भाषितुम् ।
कथं तु रामे ह्यभिरामवादिनि ब्रवीषि दोषान् गुणनित्यसम्मते ॥१०८॥
प्रताम्य वा प्रज्वल वा प्रणश्य वा सहस्रशो वा स्फुटितां महीं व्रज ।
न ते करिष्यामि वचः सुदारुणं ममाहितं केकयराजपांसने ॥१०९॥
क्षुरोपमां नित्यमसत्प्रियंवदां प्रदुष्टभावां स्वकुलोपघातिनीम् ।
न जीवितुं त्वां विषहेऽमनोरमां दिधक्षमाणां हृदयं सबन्धनम् ॥११०॥
न जीवितं मेऽस्ति कुतः पुनः सुखं विनात्मजेनात्मवतां कुतो रतिः ।
ममाहितं देवि न कर्तुमर्हसि स्पृशामि पादावपि ते प्रसीद मे ॥१११॥

स भूमिपालो विलपन्ननाथवत् स्त्रिया गृहीतो हृदयेऽतिमात्रया ।
पपात देव्याश्चरणौ प्रसारितावुभावसम्प्राप्य यथाऽऽतुरस्तथा ॥११२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्वादशः सर्गः ॥ १२ ॥

"O woman of cruel behaviour, who have dealt this (severe) blow (in the shape of Rāma's banishment) at me in my adversity (in the form of old age), when you violently utter such words at this place and on this occasion it is a matter of surprise that breaking into thousands of pieces your teeth do not on that account drop down from your mouth. (107) (I daresay) Rāma did not utter any hurtful or unkind word (to you); (for) he does not know how to speak harsh words. How, then, do you (dare) find fault with Śrī Rāma, who invariably speaks pleasing words (to all) and is ever esteemed (by all) for his excellences? (108) You may faint or flare up or perish (by swallowing poison or strangling yourself) or enter (the bowels of) the earth split up into thousands of chasms, I shall never accede to your most cruel request, which is (so) prejudicial to me, O disgrace to the king of the Kekayas! (109) I do not wish you to survive—you, who are destructive as a razor, utter falsely pleasing words, are of extremely malicious intent, nay, the bane of your family, and are intent upon burning my heart along with my vitals and (therefore) repellent to my mind. (110) My life cannot be prolonged without my son (Rāma); how, then, can there be (any) happiness (for me)? How can there be (any) joy without a son (even) to the knowers of the Self? (Therefore) you ought not to do an unfriendly act to me, O queen! I even (stoop down to) touch your feet. Be gracious to me." (111) Wailing like a forlorn child, the said monarch,—who had been gripped in the heart by Kaikeyī (who had transgressed all bounds of decorum),—sank down (unconscious) like an ailing man, not fully reaching the queen's feet, both of which lay stretched (before him)." (112)

Thus ends Canto Twelve in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रयोदशः सर्गः

Canto XIII

Further tormented by Kaikeyī through her importunity to have the boons granted by the emperor implemented the latter piteously wails his lot and reproaches her. The sun having set in the meanwhile, the emperor continues till the following morning his solicitations to Kaikeyī to allow Rāma to be installed as Prince Regent. But, Kaikeyī remaining adamant, the king in his extreme anguish of mind sinks down unconscious on the floor and, on regaining his consciousness, stops all music pertaining to the occasion of the king's quitting his bed.

अतदर्हं महाराजं शयानमतथोचितम् । ययातिमिव पुण्यान्ते देवलोकात् परिच्युतम् ॥ १ ॥

अनर्थरूपासिद्धार्था ह्यभीता भयदर्शिनी । पुनराकारयामास तमेव वरमङ्गना ॥ २ ॥
त्वं कत्थसे महाराज सत्यवादी दृढव्रतः । मम चेदं वरं कस्माद् विधारयितुमिच्छसि ॥ ३ ॥
एवमुक्तस्तु कैकेय्या राजा दशरथस्तदा । प्रत्युवाच ततः क्रुद्धो मुहूर्तं विह्वलन्निव ॥ ४ ॥
मृते मयि गते रामे वनं मनुजपुंगवे । हन्तानार्ये ममामित्रे सकामा सुखिनी भव ॥ ५ ॥
स्वर्गेऽपि खलु रामस्य कुशलं दैवतैरहम् । प्रत्यादेशादभिहितं धारयिष्ये कथं बत ॥ ६ ॥
कैकेय्याः प्रियकामेन रामः प्रव्राजितो वनम् । यदि सत्यं ब्रवीम्येतत् तदसत्यं भविष्यति ॥ ७ ॥

The dauntless queen (Kaikeyī),—who was evil incarnate (nay) whose object had not (yet) been accomplished and who scented mischief (to Bharata in Rāma's installation),—once more addressed the same good monarch, who did not deserve such (callous) behaviour (from the queen) and was lying in an unseemly manner like Yayāti fallen from heaven on the exhaustion of his merit (that had earned him a residence in heaven):—(1-2) "You brag, O monarch, that you are veracious and faithful to your vows. Yet wherefore do you seek to withhold the aforesaid boons standing to my credit?" (3) Interrogated thus by Kaikeyī on that occasion, however, King Daśaratha remained unconscious as it were for an hour or so and then angrily replied (as follows):—(4) "Alas, when I have breathed my last on Rāma, a jewel among men, having left for the woods, rejoice with your wish fulfilled, O unworthy woman inimical to me. (5) Actually inquired after the welfare of Rāma by the gods even in heaven, alas, how shall I bear to hear the words that will be uttered by them by way of reproach (on being told that he was banished by me)? (6) If I tell them this fact that Rāma was exiled by me to the forest, eager as I was to oblige Kaikeyī (yourself), the other announcement (made by me about installing Rāma as Prince Regent) will turn out to be false. (In any case I cannot escape being censured by the gods for falling back upon my word.) (7)

अपुत्रेण मया पुत्रः श्रमेण महता महान् । रामो लब्धो महातेजाः स कथं त्यज्यते मया ॥ ८ ॥
शूरश्च कृतविद्यश्च जितक्रोधः क्षमापरः । कथं कमलपत्राक्षो मया रामो विवास्यते ॥ ९ ॥
कथमिन्दीवरश्यामं दीर्घबाहुं महाबलम् । अभिराममहं रामं स्थापयिष्यामि दण्डकान् ॥१०॥
सुखानामुचितस्यैव दुःखैरनुचितस्य च । दुःखं नामानुपश्येयं कथं रामस्य धीमतः ॥११॥
यदि दुःखमकृत्वा तु मम संक्रमणं भवेत् । अदुःखार्हस्य रामस्य ततः सुखमवाप्नुयाम् ॥१२॥
नृशंसे पापसंकल्पे रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् । किं विप्रियेण कैकेयि प्रियं योजयसे मम ॥१३॥
अकीर्तिरतुला लोके ध्रुवं परिभविष्यति । तथा विलपतस्तस्य परिभ्रमितचेतसः ॥१४॥
अस्तमभ्यागमत् सूर्यो रजनी चाभ्यवर्तत । सा त्रियामा तदाऽऽर्तस्य चन्द्रमण्डलमण्डिता ॥१५॥
राज्ञो विलपमानस्य न व्यभासत शर्वरी । सदैवोष्णं विनिःश्वस्य वृद्धो दशरथो नृपः ॥१६॥
विललापार्तवद् दुःखं गगनासक्तलोचनः । न प्रभातं त्वयेच्छामि निशे नक्षत्रभूषिते ॥१७॥
क्रियतां मे दया भद्रे मयायं रचितोऽञ्जलिः । अथवा गम्यतां शीघ्रं नाहमिच्छामि निर्घृणाम् ॥१८॥
नृशंसां कैकयीं द्रष्टुं यत्कृते व्यसनं मम ।

"In the person of the highly glorious Rāma an eminent son was procured with great exertion by me, issueless as I was. How can he be forsaken by me? (8) How can the lotus-eyed Rāma—who is valiant and learned, has conquered anger and is given to forgiveness—be sent into exile by me? (9) How shall I send to the Daṇḍaka forest the long-armed Rāma, who is cerulean as a blue lotus, is endowed with extraordinary might and is (so) lovely? (10) How shall I bear to see the sad plight (in the form of exile) of the talented Rāma, who deserves (all) comforts and is unworthy of suffering? (11) If my demise were possible in any way without inflicting suffering on Rāma, who is unworthy of suffering, I should derive joy thereby. (12) O hard-hearted Kaikeyī of sinful resolve, why do you place my darling Rāma in an unwelcome predicament? (13) Disrepute which has no parallel (anywhere) will surely encompass you (on all sides)." While he was wailing as aforesaid, his mind being utterly confused, the sun sank below the horizon and the night set in. That night, graced as it was with the orb of the moon, did not at that moment illumine the heart of the distressed and wailing monarch, hurtful* as it was (by nature). Sighing dolefully all through the night, the aged King Daśaratha piteously wailed like an ailing man, his eyes directed towards the heavens. (He said): "O night embellished with stars, I do not wish you to be converted into dawn (for Rāma will have to be exiled as soon as the day dawns). (14—17) Let compassion be shown to me, O blessed one; salutation is hereby offered by me with joined palms (to you). Or let yourself be gone quickly. I wish no more to see the ruthless and hard-hearted Kaikeyī, to whom I owe my (present) adversity."

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजा कैकेयीं संयताञ्जलिः ॥१९॥
प्रसादयामास पुनः कैकेयीं राजधर्मवित् । साधुवृत्तस्य दीनस्य त्वद्गतस्य गतायुषः ॥२०॥
प्रसादः क्रियतां भद्रे देवि राज्ञो विशेषतः । शून्ये न खलु सुश्रोणि मयेदं समुदाहृतम् ॥२१॥
कुरु साधुप्रसादं मे बाले सहृदया ह्यसि । प्रसीद देवि रामो मे त्वद्दत्तं राज्यमव्ययम् ॥२२॥
लभतामसितापाङ्गे यशः परमवाप्स्यसि ।
मम रामस्य लोकस्य गुरूणां भरतस्य च । प्रियमेतद् गुरुश्रोणि कुरु चारुमुखेक्षणे ॥२३॥
विशुद्धभावस्य हि दुष्टभावा दीनस्य ताम्राश्रुकलस्य राज्ञः ।
श्रुत्वा विचित्रं करुणं विलापं भर्तुर्नृशंसा न चकार वाक्यम् ॥२४॥
ततः स राजा पुनरेव मूर्च्छितः प्रियामतुष्टां प्रतिकूलभाषिणीम् ।
समीक्ष्य पुत्रस्य विवासनं प्रति क्षितौ विसंज्ञो निपपात दुःखितः ॥२५॥
इतीव राज्ञो व्यथितस्य सा निशा जगाम घोरं श्वसतो मनस्विनः ।
विबोध्यमानः प्रतिबोधनं तदा निवारयामास स राजसत्तमः ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्रयोदशः सर्गः ॥ १३ ॥

Having told Kaikeyī thus, the emperor, who knew the duties of a king (*viz*, the expedients of conciliation etc.), then proceeded with joined palms once more to conciliate Kaikeyī (in the following words):— "Let favour be shown, O good queen, to my wretched self, guileless of conduct and fallen at your mercy, whose span of life is (well nigh) exhausted, and more so to a king. Indeed this (*viz.* Rāma's installation) was not announced by me in a lonely quarter, O lady with lovely limbs! (18—21)

---

* The word "Śarvari", used in this verse as a qualification for the night, is derived from the root 'शॄ' (to hurt or destroy).

Show abundant grace to me, O young lady, kind-hearted as you are. Be gracious to me; let my Rāma inherit the everlasting kingship granted by you, O fair-eyed queen! You will (thereby) attain the highest renown. Do this kindness to me, to Rāma, to the people, to our elders (Vasiṣṭha and others) as well as to Bharata, O lady with well-proportioned limbs and a charming countenance and eyes!" (22-23) Even on hearing the strangely-worded piteous wail of her wretched husband, Daśaratha, of guileless mind (consisting as it did of threats mixed with coaxing), whose eyes had turned coppery (through grief) and were wet with tears, the hard-hearted queen of malicious intent did not accede to his request. (24) Perceiving his beloved queen (still) unpropitiated and speaking in a hostile strain, insistent as she was on his son's exile, the aforesaid king thereupon fainted once more and, full of agony, sank down unconscious on the floor. (25) While the high-minded king, who was full of extreme agony, was dolefully sighing, that night stole past. When being awakened (by panegyrists and bards etc.), the said Daśaratha (the foremost of kings) stopped the festal music started with a view to rousing him at that moment. (26)

Thus ends Canto Thirteen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुर्दशः सर्गः

Canto XIV

Citing other instances of the emperor's fidelity to truth and threatening to lay down her life in the event of his not carrying out her wishes, Kaikeyī insists on his sending Śrī Rāma into exile at once and does not desist from her purpose even when railed at by her husband. In the meantime Sumantra makes his appearance in the gynaeceum and, extolling the emperor, reminds him of his intention to install Śrī Rāma as Prince Regent and eventually leaves the gynaeceum in order to summon Śrī Rāma at the instance of the emperor.

पुत्रशोकार्दितं पापा विसंज्ञं पतितं भुवि । विचेष्टमानमुत्प्रेक्ष्य ऐक्ष्वाकमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
पापं कृत्वेव किमिदं मम संश्रुत्य संश्रवम् । शेषे क्षितितले सन्नः स्थित्यां स्थातुं त्वमर्हसि ॥ २ ॥
आहुः सत्यं हि परमं धर्मं धर्मविदो जनाः । सत्यमाश्रित्य च मया त्वं धर्मं प्रतिचोदितः ॥ ३ ॥
संश्रुत्य शैब्यः श्येनाय स्वां तनुं जगतीपतिः । प्रदाय पक्षिणे राजा जगाम गतिमुत्तमाम् ॥ ४ ॥
तथा ह्यलर्कस्तेजस्वी ब्राह्मणे वेदपारगे । याचमाने स्वके नेत्रे उद्धृत्याविमना ददौ ॥ ५ ॥
सरितां तु पतिः स्वल्पां मर्यादां सत्यमन्वितः । सत्यानुरोधात् समये वेलां स्वां नातिवर्तते ॥ ६ ॥
सत्यमेकपदं ब्रह्म सत्ये धर्मः प्रतिष्ठितः । सत्यमेवाक्षया वेदाः सत्येनावाप्यते परम् ॥ ७ ॥
सत्यं समनुवर्तस्व यदि धर्मे धृता मतिः । स वरः सफलो मेऽस्तु वरदो ह्यसि सत्तम ॥ ८ ॥

धर्मस्यैवाभिकामार्थं मम चैवाभिचोदनात् । प्रव्राजय सुतं रामं त्रिः खलु त्वां ब्रवीम्यहम् ॥९॥
समयं च ममार्येमं यदि त्वं न करिष्यसि । अग्रतस्ते परित्यक्ता परित्यक्ष्यामि जीवितम् ॥१०॥

Perceiving Daśaratha (descended in the line of Ikṣwāku) fallen unconscious and tossing about on the floor, afflicted as he was with grief caused by (the thought of the impending) separation from his (eldest) son, the wicked Kaikeyī spoke as follows:—(1) "Having promised a boon to me as though you had perpetrated a sin, why are you lying dejected on the floor ? You ought to keep to the bounds (of morality set up by your forefathers). (2) For, men knowing what is right speak of truthfulness as the highest virtue. Nay, you have been urged by me to your duty because I take my stand on truthfulness (alone). (3) Having made a promise to a hawk (that he would part with his own flesh equal in weight to the dove that had sought his protection against the hawk) and offering his body to the bird (in exchange for the dove), King Śaibya, a ruler of the (whole) world, attained the highest destiny. (4) Plucking out his own eyes, the glorious King Alarka likewise gave them remorselessly to a Brahman, who had mastered the Vedas and asked for them. (5) Wedded to (the vow of) truthfulness, the ocean (the lord of the rivers) for its part does not even at the time of flow-tide transgress its limits even to a small extent because of its respect for truth. (6) Truth is Brahma denoted by the monosyllabic OM; virtue is rooted in Truth. The immortal Vedas represent Truth (alone); (nay) the Supreme is attained through truthfulness. (7) Firmly adhere to truthfulness, if your mind is set on piety. Let the aforesaid prayer of mine be granted, since you are a bestower of boons, O noblest king ! (8) In order to attain the coveted fruit of righteousness as well as in compliance with my request send your (eldest) son into exile (at once). Indeed I speak to you thrice (about it). (9) If you do not implement this stipulation with me, O worthy king, then, forsaken (neglected) by you, I shall lay down my life before you." (10)

एवं प्रचोदितो राजा कैकेय्या निर्विशङ्कया । नाशकत् पाशमुन्मोक्तुं बलिरिन्द्रकृतं यथा ॥११॥
उद्भ्रान्तहृदयश्चापि विवर्णवदनोऽभवत् । स धुर्यो वै परिस्पन्दन् युगचक्रान्तरं यथा ॥१२॥
विकलाभ्यां च नेत्राभ्यामपश्यन्निव भूमिपः । कृच्छ्राद् धैर्येण संस्तभ्य कैकेयीमिदमब्रवीत् ॥१३॥
यस्ते मन्त्रकृतः पाणिरग्नौ पापे मया धृतः । संत्यजामि स्वजं चैव तव पुत्रं सह त्वया ॥१४॥
प्रयाता रजनी देवि सूर्यस्योदयनं प्रति । अभिषेकाय हि जनस्त्वरयिष्यति मां ध्रुवम् ॥१५॥
रामाभिषेकसम्भारैस्तदर्थमुपकल्पितैः । रामः कारयितव्यो मे मृतस्य सलिलक्रियाम् ॥१६॥
सपुत्रया त्वया नैव कर्तव्या सलिलक्रिया । व्याहन्तास्यशुभाचारे यदि रामाभिषेचनम् ॥१७॥
न शक्तोऽद्यास्म्यहं द्रष्टुं दृष्ट्वा पूर्वं तथासुखम् । हतहर्षं निरानन्दं पुनर्जनमवाङ्मुखम् ॥१८॥

Importuned thus by Kaikeyī, who had no scruple in her mind (about what she was doing), the king could not untie the cord of plighted word that fettered him, any more than Bali could unloose the noose placed (round his body) by Indra (through his younger brother, Lord Vāmana, in order to deprive him of his sovereignty of the three worlds). (11) Like a bullock struggling to escape on finding itself between the two wheels of a cart, he got agitated at heart and his countenance grew pale. (12) Unable as it were to see with his bedimmed eyes, and controlling himself with (great) difficulty by recourse to fortitude, the king spoke to Kaikeyī as follows:—(13)

"I fully disown, O wicked woman, your hand,—which was (once) clasped by me in the presence of the nuptial fire when it had been consecrated by uttering the sacred text (गृभ्णामि etc., relevant to the occasion),—as also your son (Bharata), begotten by me, along with yourself. (14) The night has (already) fully elapsed, O queen! Perceiving the sunrise, people will surely urge me to expedite the (projected) installation (of Rāma as Prince Regent). (15) (But as I am not going to survive any longer) Rāma should be made to offer water to me, when I have breathed my last, by means of the requisites for the consecration of Rāma, collected for the purpose. (16) If (as you say) you interrupt the installation of Rāma, O woman of evil conduct, no water should be offered (to my departed spirit) by you including your son. (17) Having seen people with that joy (writ large on their expression) before, I am unable to see them bereft of merriment and devoid of joy and with their face hung downward, on the contrary, today." (18)

तां तथा ब्रुवतस्तस्य भूमिपस्य महात्मनः । प्रभाता शर्वरी पुण्या चन्द्रनक्षत्रमालिनी ॥१९॥
ततः पापसमाचारा कैकेयी पार्थिवं पुनः । उवाच परुषं वाक्यं वाक्यज्ञा रोषमूर्च्छिता ॥२०॥
किमिदं भाषसे राजन् वाक्यं गररुजोपमम् । आनाययितुमक्लिष्टं पुत्रं राममिहार्हसि ॥२१॥
स्थाप्य राज्ये मम सुतं कृत्वा रामं वनेचरम् । निस्सपत्नां च मां कृत्वा कृतकृत्यो भविष्यसि ॥२२॥
स तुन्न इव तीक्ष्णेन प्रतोदेन हयोत्तमः । राजा प्रचोदितोऽभीक्ष्णं कैकेय्या वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥२३॥
धर्मबन्धेन बद्धोऽस्मि नष्टा च मम चेतना । ज्येष्ठं पुत्रं प्रियं रामं द्रष्टुमिच्छामि धार्मिकम् ॥२४॥

While that high-souled monarch was speaking as aforesaid, the holy night with its garland of the moon and the stars passed and was followed by the dawn. (19) Overwhelmed with anger, Kaikeyī of vicious conduct, who knew how to speak, thereupon addressed the following pungent words to the king once more:—(20) "Why do you utter such words hurtful as poison and disease? You ought to summon your son Rāma here without being agonized. (21) You will have done your duty (by me only) when you have installed my son (Bharata) on the throne, sent Rāma (into exile) to roam about in the woods and rid me of thorns (in the shape of all hostile elements)." (22) Importuned again and again by Kaikeyī like an excellent horse lashed with a sharp whip, the king made the following reply:—(23) "I stand bound with the cord of morality and my judgment is lost. I (therefore) wish to see my eldest and beloved son, the pious Rāma." (24)

ततः प्रभातां रजनीमुदिते च दिवाकरे । पुण्ये नक्षत्रयोगे च मुहूर्ते च समागते ॥२५॥
वसिष्ठो गुणसम्पन्नः शिष्यैः परिवृतस्तथा । उपगृह्याशु सम्भारान् प्रविवेश पुरोत्तमम् ॥२६॥
सिक्तसम्मार्जितपथां पताकोत्तमभूषिताम् । संहृष्टमनुजोपेतां समृद्धविपणापणाम् ॥२७॥
महोत्सवसमायुक्तां राघवार्थे समुत्सुकाम् । चन्दनागुरुधूपैश्च सर्वतः परिधूमिताम् ॥२८॥
तां पुरीं समतिक्रम्य पुरंदरपुरोपमाम् । ददर्शान्तःपुरं श्रीमान् नानाध्वजगणायुतम् ॥२९॥
पौरजानपदाकीर्णं ब्राह्मणैरुपशोभितम् । यष्टिमद्भिः सुसम्पूर्णं सदश्वैः परमार्चितैः ॥३०॥
तदन्तःपुरमासाद्य व्यतिचक्राम तं जनम् । वसिष्ठः परमप्रीतः परमर्षिभिरावृतः ॥३१॥
स त्वपश्यद् विनिष्क्रान्तं सुमन्त्रं नाम सारथिम् । द्वारे मनुजसिंहस्य सचिवं प्रियदर्शनम् ॥३२॥

Meanwhile when, on the night being over, the sun had risen and the sacred hour (propitious for the installation) had duly arrived, nay, when the moon got united with a favourable lunar mansion, (*viz*, Puṣya) Sage Vasiṣṭha, who is endowed with (rare) virtues, hastily entered Ayodhya (the foremost of cities), accompanied by his pupils and taking (with him all) the requisites (connected with the installation). (25-26) Passing through the aforesaid city,—whose streets had been watered and thoroughly swept, which had been decorated with excellent buntings and was thronged with overjoyed men, which consisted of market-places stocked with abundant commodities and was marked with great festivities, which eagerly longed for the installation of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) and was fumigated on all sides with the incense of sandal-wood and aloe, (nay) which vied with Amarāvatī (the capital of Indra, the ruler of gods),—the glorious sage beheld the gynaeceum, which was decorated with rows of flags of every description and crowded with citizens and people hailing from the countryside, (nay) which was graced with Brahmans and fully packed with (liveried) servants carrying a staff and excellent horses richly adorned. (27—30) Having reached the said gynaeceum, the highly delighted Vasiṣṭha, surrounded as he was with the greatest Ṛṣis, overpassed that crowd (standing outside and arrived in front of the gate). (31) At the gate (of the gynaeceum), however, he saw the charioteer-cum-minister of Daśaratha (a lion among men), Sumantra by name, who had a pleasing appearance and had (just) come out (of the gate). (32)

तमुवाच महातेजाः सूतपुत्रं विशारदम् । वसिष्ठः क्षिप्रमाचक्ष्व नृपतेर्मामिहागतम् ॥३३॥
इमे गङ्गोदकघटाः सागरेभ्यश्च काञ्चनाः । औदुम्बरं भद्रपीठमभिषेकार्थमाहृतम् ॥३४॥
सर्वबीजानि गन्धाश्च रत्नानि विविधानि च । क्षौद्रं दधि घृतं लाजा दर्भाः सुमनसः पयः ॥३५॥
अष्टौ च कन्या रुचिरा मत्तश्च वरवारणः । चतुरश्वो रथः श्रीमान् निस्त्रिंशो धनुरुत्तमम् ॥३६॥
वाहनं नरसंयुक्तं छत्रं च शशिसंनिभम् । श्वेते च वालव्यजने भृङ्गारं च हिरण्मयम् ॥३७॥
हेमदामपिनद्धश्च ककुद्मान् पाण्डुरो वृषः । केसरी च चतुर्दंष्ट्रो हरिश्रेष्ठो महाबलः ॥३८॥
सिंहासनं व्याघ्रतनुः समिधश्च हुताशनः । सर्वे वादित्रसंघाश्च वेश्याश्चालंकृताः स्त्रियः ॥३९॥
आचार्या ब्राह्मणा गावः पुण्याश्च मृगपक्षिणः । पौरजानपदश्रेष्ठा नैगमाश्च गणैः सह ॥४०॥
एते चान्ये च बहवः प्रीयमाणाः प्रियंवदाः । अभिषेकाय रामस्य सह तिष्ठन्ति पार्थिवैः ॥४१॥
त्वरयस्व महाराजं यथा समुदितेऽहनि । पुष्ये नक्षत्रयोगे च रामो राज्यमवाप्नुयात् ॥४२॥

The highly glorious Vasiṣṭha said to that wise son of a charioteer*:—"(Please) announce at once to His Majesty that I have turned up here. (33) Here are gold pitchers containing the water of the (holy) Gangā as well as that from the (various) seas. An excellent seat of Udumbara wood has been brought for the (use of Rāma at the time of) consecration. (34) All kinds of seeds (required for the consecration) and fragrant substances as well as precious stones of every description, honey, curds, ghee, parched grains of paddy, blades of Darbha grass, flowers (of the prescribed varieties), milk, nay, eight charming virgins and a good elephant in rut, a splendid (gold) chariot drawn by four horses, a special kind of sword (called

---

* The word 'Sūta' evidently denotes here the son of a Kṣatriya through a Brahman wife (his business being that of a bard or charioteer)—ब्राह्मण्यां क्षत्रियात्सूतः (Amarakośa).

Nistriṃśa), an excellent bow, a palanquin with bearers and a (white) umbrella resembling the moon, nay, a pair of white *chowries* and a jug of gold, also a white bull with a large hump on its back and tethered with a gold chain as well as a lion with four canine teeth, a highly-spirited excellent horse, a throne (with a pair of lions made of the same material for its charms), a tigerskin and small wooden sticks (for feeding the sacrificial fire) as well as a fire, nay, all varieties of musical instruments, courtezans and (other) women decked with ornaments, teachers and (other) Brahmans, cows, sacred beasts and birds, the foremost of citizens and people hailing from the countryside as well as merchants along with their followers—these as well as many other loving people, speaking kind words, await (at the door) along with the kings, eager (as they are) to witness Rāma's installation. (35—41) Request the emperor to take time by the forelock so that Rāma may ascend the throne when the sun has fully risen and the moon gets united with the constellation named Puṣya." (42)

इति तस्य वचः श्रुत्वा सूतपुत्रो महाबलः । स्तुवन् नृपतिशार्दूलं प्रविवेश निवेशनम् ॥४३॥
तं तु पूर्वोदितं वृद्धं द्वारस्था राजसम्मताः । न शेकुरभिसंरोद्धुं राज्ञः प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥४४॥
स समीपस्थितो राज्ञस्तामवस्थामजज्ञिवान् । वाग्भिः परमतुष्टाभिरभिष्टोतुं प्रचक्रमे ॥४५॥
ततः सूतो यथापूर्वं पार्थिवस्य निवेशने । सुमन्त्रः प्राञ्जलिर्भूत्वा तुष्टाव जगतीपतिम् ॥४६॥

Hearing the aforesaid message of Sage Vasiṣṭha, the very mighty Sumantra (the son of a charioteer) entered the gynaeceum (once more), glorifying Daśaratha (a tiger among kings). (43) The porters too, who were esteemed of the king and were (ever) keen to please him, dared not stop him, senior as he was (in years as well as in wisdom) and had already been permitted to see him (whenever he would). (44) Stationed besides the king and ignorant about the aforesaid helpless plight of the monarch, Sumantra made up his mind to glorify him in most pleasing words. (45) Standing with joined palms as before in the king's gynaeceum, Sumantra, the charioteer, then extolled the emperor (as follows) :—(46)

यथा नन्दति तेजस्वी सागरो भास्करोदये । प्रीतः प्रीतेन मनसा तथा नन्दय नस्ततः ॥४७॥
इन्द्रमस्यां तु वेलायामभितुष्टाव मातलिः । सोऽजयद् दानवान् सर्वांस्तथा त्वां बोधयाम्यहम्॥४८॥
वेदाः सहाङ्गा विद्याश्च यथा ह्यात्मभुवं प्रभुम् । ब्रह्माणं बोधयन्त्यद्य तथा त्वां बोधयाम्यहम् ॥४९॥
आदित्यः सह चन्द्रेण यथा भूतधरां शुभाम् । बोधयत्यद्य पृथिवीं तथा त्वां बोधयाम्यहम् ॥५०॥
उत्तिष्ठ सुमहाराज कृतकौतुकमङ्गलः । विराजमानो वपुषा मेरोरिव दिवाकरः ॥५१॥
उदतिष्ठत रामस्य समग्रमभिषेचनम् । पौरजानपदाश्चापि नैगमश्च कृताञ्जलिः ॥५२॥
स्वयं वसिष्ठो भगवान् ब्राह्मणैः सह तिष्ठति । क्षिप्रमाज्ञाप्यतां राजन् राघवस्याभिषेचनम् ॥५३॥
यथा ह्यपालाः पशवो यथा सेना ह्यनायका । यथा चन्द्रं विना रात्रिर्यथा गावो विना वृषम् ॥५४॥
एवं हि भविता राष्ट्रं यत्र राजा न दृश्यते ।

"(Eevn) as the ocean gladdens the heart at sunrise, glorious as it is (in the sunshine), (pray) gladden us with your delighted mind, being delighted (yourself) thereby. (47) At this very hour (of sunrise) Mātali (Indra's charioteer) extolled Indra (the ruler of gods) with the result that the latter conquered all the demons (on the field of battle). So do I glorify you. (48) Even as the Vedas along with Grammar etc. (the branches of knowledge auxiliary to them) as well as the sciences (such as the science of archery) guide* (in the work of creation) the self-born Lord Brahmā (the creator), so do I awaken you (to a sense of your duty) today. (49) (Even) as the sun along with the moon arouses (the people of) the blessed earth, which sustains the (entire) creation (the sun while rising and the moon while setting), so do I arouse you today. (50) Having dressed and adorned yourself in consonance with a festal occasion, and shining brightly with your (effulgent) personality, rise, O very great monarch, like the sun from Mount Meru. (51) All the requisites for the installation of Śrī Rāma (as Prince Regent) are ready. The citizens as well as the people from the country side as also the merchants stand (at the door) with joined palms. (52) Here stands the mighty Vasiṣṭha along with the (other) Brahmans. Let the installation of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) be ordered at once. (53) Even as cattle get lost without the keeper, even as an army loses its cohesion without a general, (nay) even as a night forfeits its charm without the moon and cows are unable to calve and yield milk without a bull, a state will meet with a similar fate where the monarch is not to be seen."

एवं तस्य वचः श्रुत्वा सान्त्वपूर्वमिवार्थवत् ॥५५॥
अभ्यकीर्यत शोकेन भूय एव महीपतिः । ततस्तु राजा तं सूतं सन्नहर्षः सुतं प्रति ॥५६॥
शोकरक्तेक्षणः श्रीमानुद्वीक्ष्योवाच धार्मिकः । वाक्यैस्तु खलु मर्माणि मम भूयो निकृन्तसि ॥५७॥
सुमन्त्रः करुणं श्रुत्वा दृष्ट्वा दीनं च पार्थिवम् । प्रगृहीताञ्जलिः किंचित् तस्माद् देशादपाक्रमत् ॥५८॥
यदा वक्तुं स्वयं दैन्यान्न शशाक महीपतिः । तदा सुमन्त्रं मन्त्रज्ञा कैकेयी प्रत्युवाच ह ॥५९॥
सुमन्त्र राजा रजनीं रामहर्षसमुत्सुकः । प्रजागरपरिश्रान्तो निद्रावशमुपागतः ॥६०॥
तद् गच्छ त्वरितं सूत राजपुत्रं यशस्विनम् । राममानय भद्रं ते नात्र कार्या विचारणा ॥६१॥
अश्रुत्वा राजवचनं कथं गच्छामि भामिनि । तच्छ्रुत्वा मन्त्रिणो वाक्यं राजा मन्त्रिणमब्रवीत् ॥६२॥
सुमन्त्र रामं द्रक्ष्यामि शीघ्रमानय सुन्दरम् । स मन्यमानः कल्याणं हृदयेन ननन्द च ॥६३॥
निर्जगाम च स प्रीत्या त्वरितो राजशासनात् । सुमन्त्रश्चिन्तयामास त्वरितं चोदितस्तया ॥६४॥
व्यक्तं रामाभिषेकार्थे इहायास्यति धर्मराट् ।

Hearing his aforesaid significant submission, prefaced with words of consolation as it were, the emperor (*lit.*, the ruler of the earth) was overcome with grief once more. Looking up towards the well-known charioteer, with eyes reddened through grief for his son, the glorious and pious king, whose joy had ended for good, thereupon said to him, "With your words (of praise uttered at this inopportune moment) indeed you are positively cutting me to the quick once more." (54—57) Hearing his pathetic remark and finding the king miserable, Sumantra with tightly joined palms slipped away to some distance from that place. (58) When, owing to his miserable condition, the emperor could not speak himself, Kaikeyī, who was well-versed in statecraft, replied (on behalf of the emperor) to Sumantra (as follows)—so the tradition goes. (59) "Completely exhausted due to uninterrupted wakefulness during the night, impatient as he was through jubilation over (the prospect of) Śrī Rāma's installation, the king, O Sumantra, has fallen asleep. (60) Therefore, go quickly, O charioteer, and bring the illustrious Prince Rāma (here); may good betide you ! No thought need be bestowed on this.' (61) "Without hearing the king's command, O queen, how shall I go ?" Hearing the aforesaid reply of the minister, the king spoke to him (as follows):—(62) "Sumantra, I should like to see Rāma, (please) bring the charming boy at once." And deeming Śrī Rāma's visit good (for the king), the minister rejoiced at heart and in obedience to the king's command he sallied forth quickly with delight. Urged by Kaikeyī (once more in the meantime) to make haste, Sumantra thought, "Evidently I am goaded (to bring Rāma) quickly with the object of seeing Rāma (expeditiously) installed (as Prince Regent), as the pious king feels fatigued (on account of over-exertion) in that connection (and is reluctant to move out)"

---

* It is a well-known fact that Brahmā derives his knowledge of objects to be evolved at the beginning of creation from the Vedas.

इति सूतो मतिं कृत्वा हर्षेण महता पुनः ॥६५॥
निर्जगाम महातेजा राघवस्य दिदृक्षया ।
सागरह्रदसंकाशात् सुमन्त्रोऽन्तःपुराच्छुभात् । निष्क्रम्य जनसम्बाधं ददर्श द्वारमग्रतः ॥६६॥
ततः पुरस्तात् सहसा विनिस्सृतो महीपतेर्द्वारगतान् विलोकयन् ।
ददर्श पौरान् विविधान् महाधनानुपस्थितान् द्वारमुपेत्य विष्ठितान् ॥६७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुर्दशः सर्गः ॥ १४ ॥

Arriving at this conclusion, the highly glorious charioteer, Sumantra, issued forth once more with great delight from the lovely gynaeceum, which appeared like a pool in the sea (as compared to the whole city, of which it formed only a small part). Coming out, he saw the (main) entrance crowded with men on the front side. (63—66) Fully emerged out of the gynaeceum all of a sudden and taking note of the officials stationed at the gate, Sumantra saw citizens of various classes collected close to the door and present with abundant riches (brought by way of an offering). (67)

Thus ends Canto Fourteen in the Ayodhya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चदशः सर्गः

Canto XV

While going out of the gynaeceum to bring Śrī Rāma, Sumantra sees Vasiṣṭha and others as well as a number of kings waiting at the gate and hastens back to announce their presence to the king. He is, however, sent back to fetch Śrī Rāma and forthwith enters the latter's apartments.

ते तु तां रजनीमुष्य ब्राह्मणा वेदपारगाः । उपतस्थुरुपस्थानं सहराजपुरोहिताः ॥ १ ॥
अमात्या बलमुख्याश्च मुख्या ये निगमस्य च । राघवस्याभिषेकार्थे प्रीयमाणाः सुसंगताः ॥ २ ॥

उदिते विमले सूर्ये पुष्ये चाभ्यागतेऽहनि । लग्ने कर्कटके प्राप्ते जन्म रामस्य च स्थिते ॥ ३ ॥
अभिषेकाय रामस्य द्विजेन्द्रैरुपकल्पितम् ।

Having spent the aforesaid night (presumably at the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha), the Brahmans that had mastered the Vedas and had been invited to officiate at the installation ceremony stood at the gate of the royal palace along with the king's family priests (Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva and others). (1) Full of delight, the ministers as well as the commanders of the army as also those who happened to be the foremost among the mercantile community (also) gathered together in a systematic manner for the installation of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (2) A clear sun having risen and the asterism named Puṣya having appeared with the moon in the daytime and the sun having entered the zodiacal sign named Cancer (the fourth sign of the zodiac), a phenomenon which had appeared at the time of Śrī Rāma's birth (as well), everything required for the installation of Śrī Rāma (as Prince Regent) was got ready by the foremost of Brahmans.

काञ्चना जलकुम्भाश्च भद्रपीठं स्वलंकृतम् ॥ ४ ॥
रथश्च सम्यगास्तीर्णो भास्वता व्याघ्रचर्मणा । गङ्गायमुनयोः पुण्यात् संगमादाहृतं जलम् ॥ ५ ॥
याश्चान्याः सरितः पुण्या ह्रदाः कूपाः सरांसि च । प्राग्वहाश्चोर्ध्ववाहाश्च तिर्यग्वाहाश्च क्षीरिणः ॥ ६ ॥
ताभ्यश्चैवाहृतं तोयं समुद्रेभ्यश्च सर्वशः । क्षौद्रं दधि घृतं लाजा दर्भाः सुमनसः पयः ॥ ७ ॥
अष्टौ च कन्या रुचिरा मत्तश्च वरवारणः । सजलाः क्षीरिभिश्छन्ना घटाः काञ्चनराजताः ॥ ८ ॥
पद्मोत्पलयुता भान्ति पूर्णाः परमवारिणा । चन्द्रांशुविकचप्रख्यं पाण्डुरं रत्नभूषितम् ॥ ९ ॥
सज्जं तिष्ठति रामस्य वालव्यजनमुत्तमम् । चन्द्रमण्डलसंकाशमातपत्रं च पाण्डुरम् ॥१०॥
सज्जं द्युतिकरं श्रीमदभिषेकपुरस्सरम् । पाण्डुरश्च वृषः सज्जः पाण्डुराश्वश्च संस्थितः ॥११॥
वादित्राणि च सर्वाणि वन्दिनश्च तथापरे ।

Gold pitchers full of water and an auspicious wooden seat duly adorned, also a chariot completely upholstered with a brilliant tigerskin and water brought from the sacred confluence of the (holy) Gangā and Yamunā were kept ready. (3—5) Water was also brought from as many other holy rivers, pools, wells and lakes as there are—rivers (like the Narmada) whose streams have their origin in the east (and flow in a westerly direction), those whose streams originate in lofty mountains (and flow towards the plains) and others (such as the Gangā at Varanasi, the Gandaka and the Sone), flowing northward or southward and having water white as milk,—as well as from the seas on all sides. Honey, curds, ghee, grains of parched paddy, blades of (the sacred) Kuśa grass, flowers (appropriate to the occasion), water, eight charming virgins, an excellent elephant in rut, gold and silver pitchers full of water covered with leaves of trees yielding a milk-white resin—pitchers which were not only filled with excellent water but also contained lotuses and lilies, (all) shone brightly. An excellent pair of white *chowries* resplendent as the scattered rays of the moon and adorned with jewels was kept ready for fanning Śrī Rāma with (at the time of his installation). A white and splendid umbrella, which resembled the lunar orb and cast its effulgence all round, stood ready in front of (all other) articles required for the consecration. A white bull was also ready and a white horse stood fully ready. (6—11) Also all kinds of musical instruments and panegyrists as well as bards were present.

इक्ष्वाकूणां यथा राज्ये सम्भ्रियेताभिषेचनम् ॥१२॥
तथाजातीयमादाय राजपुत्राभिषेचनम् । ते राजवचनात् तत्र समवेता महीपतिम् ॥१३॥
अपश्यन्तोऽब्रुवन् को नु राज्ञो नः प्रतिवेदयेत् । न पश्यामश्च राजानमुदितश्च दिवाकरः ॥१४॥
यौवराज्याभिषेकश्च सज्जो रामस्य धीमतः । इति तेषु ब्रुवाणेषु सर्वांस्तांश्च महीपतीन् ॥१५॥
अब्रवीत् तानिदं वाक्यं सुमन्त्रो राजसत्कृतः । रामं राज्ञो नियोगेन त्वरया प्रस्थितो ह्यहम् ॥१६॥
पूज्या राज्ञो भवन्तश्च रामस्य तु विशेषतः । अयं पृच्छामि वचनात् सुखमायुष्मतामहम् ॥१७॥
राज्ञः सम्प्रतिबुद्धस्य चानागमनकारणम् । इत्युक्त्वान्तःपुरद्वारमाजगाम पुराणवित् ॥१८॥
सदासक्तं च तद् वेश्म सुमन्त्रः प्रविवेश ह । तुष्टावास्य तदा वंशं प्रविश्य स विशाम्पतेः ॥१९॥
शयनीयं नरेन्द्रस्य तदासाद्य व्यतिष्ठत । सोऽत्यासाद्य तु तद् वेश्म तिरस्करणिमन्तरा ॥२०॥
आशीर्भिर्गुणयुक्ताभिरभितुष्टाव राघवम् ।

Failing to perceive the emperor, the Brahmans and others who had assembled there in obedience to the latter's command, taking (with them) requisites for the consecration of a prince (as Prince Regent), of a standard and on a scale according to which requisites for such installation are got together in a kingdom ruled by the Ikṣwākus, said to one another, "Who on earth will announce our presence to the king ? And we don't see the king, although the sun is (already) up. (12—14) Nay, everything in connection with the installation of the wise Śrī Rāma to the office of Prince Regent is ready." While they were saying so, Sumantra, who was honoured by the king; spoke as follows to them all as well as to the kings present there:—"Under orders of His Majesty I am really out in a hurry to bring Śrī Rāma. (15-16) You are, however, worthy of adoration even to the king, much more so to Śrī Rāma. I shall (therefore) presently inquire after His Majesty's welfare on behalf of your blessed selves as also the reason of his failure to appear (before you) even though he is fully awake." Saying so, Sumantra (who knew many ancient anecdotes, being many winters old and belonging as he did to the bard class) returned to the entrance of the gynaeceum. (17-18) Nay, Sumantra, it is said, (once more) entered the gynaeceum, which had its doors always open to him. Entering it, he then glorified the lineage of the aforesaid king. (19) Reaching the well-known royal bed-chamber, he paused (awhile). (Then) going very near that room behind the arras he extolled Daśaratha (a scion of Raghu) through benedictions accompanied with praises (as follows):—

सोमसूर्यौ च काकुत्स्थ शिववैश्रवणावपि ॥२१॥
वरुणश्चाग्निरिन्द्रश्च विजयं प्रदिशन्तु ते । गता भगवती रात्रिरहः शिवमुपस्थितम् ॥२२॥
बुद्ध्यस्व राजशार्दूल कुरु कार्यमनन्तरम् । ब्राह्मणा बलमुख्याश्च नैगमाश्चागतास्त्विह ॥२३॥
दर्शनं तेऽभिकाङ्क्षन्ते प्रतिबुद्ध्यस्व राघव । स्तुवन्तं तं तदा सूतं सुमन्त्रं मन्त्रकोविदम् ॥२४॥
प्रतिबुद्ध्य ततो राजा इदं वचनमब्रवीत् । राममानय सूतेति यदस्यभिहितो मया ॥२५॥
किमिदं कारणं येन ममाज्ञा प्रतिवाह्यते । न चैव सम्प्रसुप्तोऽहमानयेहाशु राघवम् ॥२६॥
इति राजा दशरथः सूतं तत्रान्वशात् पुनः । स राजवचनं श्रुत्वा शिरसा प्रतिपूज्य तम् ॥२७॥
निर्जगाम नृपावासान्मन्यमानः प्रियं महत् । प्रपन्नो राजमार्गं च पताकाध्वजशोभितम् ॥२८॥

हृष्टः प्रमुदितः सूतो जगामाशु विलोकयन् । स सूतस्तत्र शुश्राव रामाधिकरणाः कथाः ॥२९॥
अभिषेचनसंयुक्ताः सर्वलोकस्य हृष्टवत् ।

"May the moon-god and the sun-god as well as Lord Śiva and Kubera (son of Viśravā and the god of riches) as also Varuṇa (the god of water), Agni (the god of fire) and Indra (the lord of paradise) grant you victory. The glorious night has passed, (and) the blessed daytime has arrived. (20—22) Wake up, O tiger among the rulers of men, (pray) accomplish what ought to be done next. Arrived here, Brahmans, commanders of the army and merchants for their part long to see you. (Pray) awake, O scion of Raghu !" Recognizing him (by his voice) the king then spoke as follows to Sumantra, the charioteer, who was expert in giving advice:—"Since you have been commanded by me in the following words: 'Bring Rāma (to me), O bard !' what is the reason due to which my command is being acted against ? Nor am I fast asleep (as you think me to be). (Therefore) speedily bring Rāma here." (23—26) So did King Daśaratha instruct the bard once more in the said gynaeceum. Hearing the king's command and saluting him with his head (bent low), Sumantra issued forth from the king's palace, holding the command most welcome (to his heart). Having reached the main road, (which was) decorated with buntings and flags, the charioteer, who felt delighted, nay, overjoyed (over the prospect of seeing Śrī Rāma installed as Prince Regent), quickly proceeded (further), casting his glances all round. On the way the said bard heard joyfully the talks bearing on Śrī Rāma and connected with his installation from the lips of all men.

ततो ददर्श रुचिरं कैलाससदृशप्रभम् ॥३०॥
रामवेश्म सुमन्त्रस्तु शक्रवेश्मसमप्रभम् । महाकपाटपिहितं वितर्दिशतशोभितम् ॥३१॥
काञ्चनप्रतिमैकाग्रं मणिविद्रुमतोरणम् । शारदाभ्रघनप्रख्यं दीप्तं मेरुगुहासमम् ॥३२॥
मणिभिर्वरमाल्यानां सुमहद्भिरलंकृतम् । मुक्तामणिभिराकीर्णं चन्दनागुरुभूषितम् ॥३३॥
गन्धान् मनोज्ञान् विसृजद् दार्दुरं शिखरं यथा । सारसैश्च मयूरैश्च विनदद्भिर्विराजितम् ॥३४॥
सुकृतेहामृगाकीर्णमुत्कीर्णं भक्तिभिस्तथा । मनश्चक्षुश्च भूतानामाददत् तिग्मतेजसा ॥३५॥
चन्द्रभास्करसंकाशं कुबेरभवनोपमम् । महेन्द्रधामप्रतिमं नानापक्षिसमाकुलम् ॥३६॥
मेरुशृङ्गसमं सूतो रामवेश्म ददर्श ह । उपस्थितैः समाकीर्णं जनैरञ्जलिकारिभिः ॥३७॥
उपादाय समाक्रान्तैस्तदा जानपदैर्जनैः । रामाभिषेकसुमुखैरुन्मुखैः समलंकृतम् ॥३८॥
महामेघसमप्रख्यमुदग्रं सुविराजितम् । नानारत्नसमाकीर्णं कुब्जकैरपि चावृतम् ॥३९॥

Sumantra for his part then caught sight of the charming palace of Śrī Rāma, whose splendour vied with that of Mount Kailāsa, nay, which shone like Indra's (own) palace (in paradise) and was secured with massive doors and embellished with hundreds of balconies. (27—31) Its main facade, was adorned with gold images and it was provided with an outer gateway of gems and corals. Resplendent like a cave of Mount Meru, it cast a splendour compact as an autumnal cloud. (32) It was decorated with very large gems forming part of wreaths of gold flowers, was full of pearls and was adorned with sandal trees and aloes. (33) It emitted pleasing odours like a summit of Mount Dardura (a mountain abounding in sandalwood in the vicinity of the Malayagiri mountain) and was graced with crying cranes and peacocks. (34) It was full of beautifully designed images of wolves and decked with fine wooden carvings and attracted the mind and eyes of men by its bright splendour. (35) It shone like the moon and the sun and vied with the palace of Kubera (the god of riches), was a replica of the abode of the mighty Indra and abounded in birds of various kinds. (36) The bard (thus) beheld the palace of Śrī Rāma resembling Mount Meru (in height) and thronged with men arrived (there) and standing with joined palms. (37) It was fully graced with men from the countryside arrived on that occasion taking presents (with them), eager to behold, and cheerful over, his installation. (38) Stately and highly resplendent, it shone like a large cloud; (nay) it was full of precious stones of every description and was also crowded with servants. (39)

स वाजियुक्तेन रथेन सारथिः समाकुलं राजकुलं विराजयन् ।
वरूथिना राजगृहाभिपातिना पुरस्य सर्वस्य मनांसि हर्षयन् ॥४०॥
ततः समासाद्य महाधनं महत् प्रहृष्टरोमा स बभूव सारथिः ।
मृगैर्मयूरैश्च समाकुलोल्बणं गृहं वरार्हस्य शचीपतेरिव ॥४१॥
स तत्र कैलासनिभाः स्वलंकृताः प्रविश्य कक्ष्यास्त्रिदशालयोपमाः ।
प्रियान् वरान् राममते स्थितान् बहून् व्यपोह्य शुद्धान्तमुपस्थितो रथी ॥४२॥
स तत्र शुश्राव च हर्षयुक्ता रामाभिषेकार्थकृतां जनानाम् ।
नरेन्द्रसूनोरभिमङ्गलार्थाः सर्वस्य लोकस्य गिरः प्रहृष्टाः ॥४३॥

Irradiating the overcrowded main road with his chariot drawn by (four) horses and provided with a fender or protecting plank (with a view to avoiding collision) and heading towards the royal palace (of which Śrī Rāma's palace obviously formed an integral part), and delighting the mind of the people of the whole city, the charioteer arrived at the entrance of Śrī Rāma's palace. (40) The said charioteer was thrilled all over (with joy) to reach later the great palace of Śrī Rāma (who deserved all excellent possessions), full of abundant riches and thickly crowded with deer and peacocks, and resembling the palace of Indra (the spouse of Śachī). (41) Entering (one after another) the (three) gates (of the palace),—which were (all) richly decorated and shone like Mount Kailāsa (in height) and which vied with the realm of gods (in beauty),—and overpassing the many excellent men present there, who followed the mind of Śrī Rāma and as such were loved by him, the charioteer arrived at the gynaeceum. (42) There he heard the joyful words of men engaged in services connected with the installation (as Prince Regent) of Śrī Rāma, as well as the highly delighted talks, invoking all-round blessings on the heir apparent, of all people. (43)

महेन्द्रसद्मप्रतिमं च वेश्म रामस्य रम्यं मृगपक्षिजुष्टम् ।
ददर्श मेरोरिव शृङ्गमुच्चं विभ्राजमानं प्रभया सुमन्त्रः ॥४४॥
उपस्थितैरञ्जलिकारिभिश्च सोपायनैर्जानपदैर्जनैश्च ।
कोट्या परार्ध्यैश्च विमुक्तयानैः समाकुलं द्वारपदं ददर्श ॥४५॥
ततो महामेघमहीधराभं प्रभिन्नमत्यङ्कुशमत्यसह्यम् ।
रामोपवाह्यं रुचिरं ददर्श शत्रुंजयं नागमुदग्रकायम् ॥४६॥

स्वलंकृतान् साश्वरथान् सकुञ्जरानमात्यमुख्यांश्च ददर्श वल्लभान् ।
व्यपोह्य सूतः सहितान् समन्ततः समृद्धमन्तःपुरमाविवेश ह ॥४७॥
ततोऽद्रिकूटाचलमेघसंनिभं महाविमानोपमवेश्मसंयुतम् ।
अवार्यमाणः प्रविवेश सारथिः प्रभूतरत्नं मकरो यथार्णवम् ॥४८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चदशः सर्गः ॥ १५ ॥

Sumantra further saw the lovely palace of Śrī Rāma, which vied with the palace of the mighty Indra and was inhabited by beasts and birds (of every description) and which shone brightly with its splendour like a lofty summit of Mount Meru. (44) He beheld the passage leading to the entrance, overcrowded with numberless people from the countryside, standing with joined palms and carrying presents, their conveyances having been left at some distance. (45) He next saw the charming elephant in rut that carried Śrī Rāma on its back, and was tall as a mountain crowned with a large mass of cloud, was most formidable and could not be controlled with a goad, and which was capable of conquering the enemy and was accordingly known by the name of Śatruñjaya. (46) Sumantra also saw the foremost of the king's ministers, who were fully adorned and had come either on horseback or on the back of their elephant or had driven in their chariot, and were beloved of the king. Driving them into a corner, collected as they were at one spot, he entered the gynaeceum, which was rich on all sides: so the tradition goes. (47) Unchallenged (by the porters) the charioteer thereupon freely entered the gynaeceum (of Śrī Rāma's palace),—which shone like a stationary cloud perched on a mountain-peak, and consisted of mansions resembling large aerial cars and contained a stock of abundant precious stones,—(even) as an alligator would enter an ocean abounding in precious stones. (48)

Thus ends Canto Fifteen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

षोडशः सर्गः

Canto XVI

Seeking the presence of Śrī Rāma, Sumantra communicates to him the emperor's command asking Sumantra to bring Rāma with him, and departs. Mounting his gold chariot and accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa, who holds an umbrella over the former's head and waves a pair of *chowries* in order to fan him, and followed by a number of elephants and horses, Śrī Rāma drives in state to see Daśaratha, listening *en route* to his own glory sung by jubilant men and women.

स तदन्तःपुरद्वारं समतीत्य जनाकुलम् । प्रविविक्तां ततः कक्ष्यामाससाद पुराणवित् ॥ १ ॥
प्रासकार्मुकबिभ्रद्भिर्युवभिर्मृष्टकुण्डलैः । अप्रमादिभिरेकाग्रैः स्वानुरक्तैरधिष्ठिताम् ॥ २ ॥

तत्र काषायिणो वृद्धान् वेत्रपाणीन् स्वलंकृतान् । ददर्श विष्ठितान् द्वारि स्त्र्यध्यक्षान् सुसमाहितान् ॥ ३ ॥
ते समीक्ष्य समायान्तं रामप्रियचिकीर्षवः । सहसोत्पतिताः सर्वे ह्यासनेभ्यः ससम्भ्रमाः ॥ ४ ॥
तानुवाच विनीतात्मा सूतपुत्रः प्रदक्षिणः । क्षिप्रमाख्यात रामाय सुमन्त्रो द्वारि तिष्ठति ॥ ५ ॥
ते राममुपसंगम्य भर्तुः प्रियचिकीर्षवः । सहभार्याय रामाय क्षिप्रमेवाचचक्षिरे ॥ ६ ॥
प्रतिवेदितमाज्ञाय सूतमभ्यन्तरं पितुः । तत्रैवानाययामास राघवः प्रियकाम्यया ॥ ७ ॥

Passing through the said (outermost) gate of the gynaeceum, which was crowded with men, Sumantra (who knew many old legends) next reached the other (inner) gate, which was very lonely and was guarded by young men wielding a Prāsa (a barbed missile) and a bow and adorned with ear-rings of burnished gold, unfailing in their duty and single-minded of purpose and fully devoted (to their master) (1-2) Here he saw stationed at the gate, staff in hand, aged men clad in ochre-coloured liveries and richly adorned, most attentive to their duty and guarding the inmates of the gynaeceum. (3) Perceiving him coming near they all sprang up from their seats, full of awe, eager as they (all) were to do loving service to Śrī Rāma. (4) Sumantra, the son of a bard, who had a disciplined mind and was highly expert in deliberation etc., said to them, "(Please) say at once to Prince Rāma, Sumantra waits at the door." (5) Approaching Śrī Rāma, they speedily reported the matter to the heir apparent, who was closeted with his spouse. Receiving the information, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) caused the bard, who was in the confidence of his father (Emperor Daśaratha), to be brought in the same room where he was (closeted with his spouse), prompted as he was with a desire to please Sumantra. (6-7)

तं वैश्रवणसंकाशमुपविष्टं स्वलंकृतम् । ददर्श सूतः पर्यङ्के सौवर्णे सोत्तरच्छदे ॥ ८ ॥
वराहरुधिराभेण शुचिना च सुगन्धिना । अनुलिप्तं परार्ध्येन चन्दनेन परंतपम् ॥ ९ ॥
स्थितया पार्वतश्चापि वालव्यजनहस्तया । उपेतं सीतया भूयश्चित्रया शशिनं यथा ॥१०॥
तं तपन्तमिवादित्यमुपपन्नं स्वतेजसा । ववन्दे वरदं वन्दी विनयज्ञो विनीतवत् ॥११॥
प्राञ्जलिः सुमुखं दृष्ट्वा विहारशयनासने । राजपुत्रमुवाचेदं सुमन्त्रो राजसत्कृतः ॥१२॥
कौसल्या सुप्रजा राम पिता त्वां द्रष्टुमिच्छति । महिष्यापि हि कैकेय्या गम्यतां तत्र मा चिरम् ॥१३॥
एवमुक्तस्तु संहृष्टो नरसिंहो महाद्युतिः । ततः सम्मानयामास सीतामिदमुवाच ह ॥१४॥

The bard saw Śrī Rāma, the chastiser of his foes, resplendent as Kubera (son of Viśravā), seated, richly adorned, on a gold couch overspread with a bed-cover, nay, besmeared with holy and fragrant sandal-paste of superb excellence and crimson as the blood of a boar, and further accompanied by Princess Sītā too, standing by his side, *chowrie* in hand, (even) as the moon-god is accompanied by Chitrā, (the goddess presiding over an asterism of the same name). (8—10) Like a humble petitioner, the bard, who knew the rules of decorum, greeted Śrī Rāma, a bestower of boons, who was invested with his native glory and was glowing like the sun. (11) Seeing the heir apparent with a cheerful countenance on his couch intended for repose at the time of recreation, Sumantra, who was honoured by the king, spoke (to him) with joined palms as follows :—(12) "Kausalyā is blessed in having you for a son! Along with Queen Kaikeyī too your father (Emperor

Daśaratha) desires to see you. Be pleased to go there : let there be no delay.' (13) Highly pleased, Śrī Rāma (a lion among men), who was possessed of great splendour, thereupon showed his great regard for Sītā—so the tradition goes—and spoke to her as follows :—(14)

देवि देवश्च देवी च समागम्य मदन्तरे । मन्त्रयेते ध्रुवं किंचिदभिषेचनसंहितम् ॥१५॥
लक्षयित्वा ह्यभिप्रायं प्रियकामा सुदक्षिणा । संचोदयति राजानं मदर्थमसितेक्षणा ॥१६॥
सा प्रहृष्टा महाराज हितकामानुवर्तिनी । जननी चार्थकामा मे केकयाधिपतेः सुता ॥१७॥
दिष्ट्या खलु महाराजो महिष्या प्रियया सह । सुमन्त्रं प्राहिणोद् दूतमर्थकामकरं मम ॥१८॥
यादृशी परिषत् तत्र तादृशो दूत आगतः । ध्रुवमद्यैव मां राजा यौवराज्येऽभिषेक्ष्यति ॥१९॥
हन्त शीघ्रमितो गत्वा द्रक्ष्यामि च महीपतिम् । सह त्वं परिवारेण सुखमास्स्व रमस्व च ॥२०॥

"Meeting together, O godly lady, the king (my father) and the queen (mother Kaikeyī) too are surely having some talk concerning me on the topic of my installation (as Prince Regent). (15) Reading his mind and desirous of pleasing him, that dark-eyed mother of mine, the daughter of the king of the Kekayas, who is very clever and favourable to the king, (nay) who wishes well of him and is obedient to him and is my well-wisher (too), is surely pressing the king, who is the king of kings, on my behalf, highly delighted as she is (over the prospect of my installation). (16-17) Luckily enough (for me) has the emperor (my father) with his beloved queen (mother Kaikeyī) sent as his messenger Sumantra, who advances my earthly interests and accomplishes the objects of my desire. (18) A messenger of the same type as the council which is in session in the royal gynaeceum has come (to me). (From this I conclude that) the king will surely install me in the office of Prince Regent this very day. (19) Ah, departing from this place soon, I shall see the emperor (*lit.*, the ruler of the earth). Abide you comfortably with your female companions (here) and rejoice." (20)

पतिसम्मानिता सीता भर्तारमसितेक्षणा । आ द्वारमनुवव्राज मङ्गलान्यभिदध्युषी ॥२१॥
राज्यं द्विजातिभिर्जुष्टं राजसूयाभिषेचनम् । कर्तुमर्हति ते राजा वासवस्येव लोककृत् ॥२२॥
दीक्षितं व्रतसम्पन्नं वराजिनधरं शुचिम् । कुरङ्गशृङ्गपाणिं च पश्यन्ती त्वां भजाम्यहम् ॥२३॥
पूर्वां दिशं वज्रधरो दक्षिणां पातु ते यमः । वरुणः पश्चिमामाशां धनेशस्तूत्तरां दिशम् ॥२४॥

Invoking (divine) blessings (on her husband), the dark-eyed Sītā, who was greatly honoured by her spouse, followed her husband up to the gate. (21) "(Having once installed you in the office of Prince Regent), the king ought to consecrate you (in course of time), as Brahmā (the maker of the universe) consecrated Indra, for the Rājasūya sacrifice (as a preliminary to which all the kings on the globe shall have to be conquered and reduced to submission), as his kingdom is inhabited by (learned) Brahmans (well-versed in ritual acts). (22) Seeing you consecrated (for the said sacrifice) and rich in religious austerities (appropriate to the occasion), wearing excellent deerskin (for loin-cloth) and leading a pure (chaste) life and carrying a horn of an antelope in your hand (in order to scratch your limbs with when feeling an itching sensation), I wish to serve you (in that state). (23) May Indra (the wielder of the thunderbolt) guard your eastern side; Yama (the god of punishment), your southern side; Varuṇa (the god of water), your western side and Kubera (the lord of riches) your northern side." (24)

अथ सीतामनुज्ञाप्य कृतकौतुकमङ्गलः । निश्चक्राम सुमन्त्रेण सह रामो निवेशनात् ॥२५॥
पर्वतादिव निष्क्रम्य सिंहो गिरिगुहाशयः । लक्ष्मणं द्वारि सोऽपश्यत् प्रह्वाञ्जलिपुटं स्थितम् ॥२६॥
अथ मध्यमकक्ष्यायां समागच्छत् सुहृज्जनैः । स सर्वानर्थिनो दृष्ट्वा समेत्य प्रतिनन्द्य च ॥२७॥
ततः पावकसंकाशमारुरोह रथोत्तमम् । वैयाघ्रं पुरुषव्याघ्रो राजितं राजनन्दनः ॥२८॥
मेघनादमसम्बाधं मणिहेमविभूषितम् । मुष्णन्तमिव चक्षूंषि प्रभया मेरुवर्चसम् ॥२९॥
करेणुशिशुकल्पैश्च युक्तं परमवाजिभिः । हरियुक्तं सहस्राक्षो रथमिन्द्र इवाशुगम् ॥३०॥
प्रययौ तूर्णमास्थाय राघवो ज्वलितः श्रिया । स पर्जन्य इवाकाशे स्वनवानभिनादयन् ॥३१॥
निकेतान्निर्ययौ श्रीमान् महाभ्रादिव चन्द्रमाः ।

Taking leave of Sītā and having gone through auspicious rites appropriate to the solemn occasion, Śrī Rāma forthwith departed from his palace along with Sumantra. (25) Issuing forth from the palace as a lion dwelling in a mountain-cave would emerge from a mountainous valley, he beheld Lakṣmaṇa standing at the (very first) gate bent low with joined palms. (26) Then, at the middle gate, he met his friends and relations. Seeing those who longed for his sight or for his installation and having met and addressed them kindly, the heir apparent, who was a tiger among men, mounted next his splendid and excellent chariot, which shone like fire and was upholstered with tigerskin. (27-28) Riding his chariot, which moved rapidly with a sound as of thunder and was commodious, was inlaid with gems and gold, (nay) which shone like Mount Meru (the gold mountain) and blinded one's eyes with its splendour as it were, which was driven by super-excellent horses almost as big as young elephants,—(even) as Indra (the thousand-eyed god) does his own chariot, driven by green horses,—Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), irradiated with his glory, quickly departed. Thundering like a cloud in the sky and making the quarters resound (with its rattle), that glorious chariot proceeded from the palace as the moon emerges from a large cloud.

चित्रचामरपाणिस्तु लक्ष्मणो राघवानुजः ॥३२॥
जुगोप भ्रातरं भ्राता रथमास्थाय पृष्ठतः । ततो हलहलाशब्दस्तुमुलः समजायत ॥३३॥
तस्य निष्क्रममाणस्य जनौघस्य समन्ततः । ततो हयवरा मुख्या नागाश्च गिरिसंनिभाः ॥३४॥
अनुजग्मुस्तथा रामं शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः । अग्रतश्चास्य संनद्धाश्चन्दनागुरुभूषिताः ॥३५॥
खड्गचापधराः शूरा जग्मुराशंसवो जनाः । ततो वादित्रशब्दाश्च स्तुतिशब्दाश्च वन्दिनाम् ॥३६॥
सिंहनादाश्च शूराणां ततः शुश्रुविरे पथि । हर्म्यवातायनस्थाभिर्भूषिताभिः समन्ततः ॥३७॥
कीर्यमाणः सुपुष्पौघैर्ययौ स्त्रीभिररिंदमः । रामं सर्वानवद्याङ्ग्यो रामपिप्रीषया ततः ॥३८॥
वचोभिरग्र्यैर्हर्म्यस्थाः क्षितिस्थाश्च ववन्दिरे । नूनं नन्दति ते माता कौसल्या मातृनन्दन ॥३९॥
पश्यन्ती सिद्धयात्रं त्वां पित्र्यं राज्यमुपस्थितम् । सर्वसीमन्तिनीभ्यश्च सीतां सीमन्तिनीं वराम् ॥४०॥
अमन्यन्त हि ता नार्यो रामस्य हृदयप्रियाम् । तया सुचरितं देव्या पुरा नूनं महत् तपः ॥४१॥
रोहिणीव शशाङ्केन रामसंयोगमाप या ।
इति प्रासादशृङ्गेषु प्रमदाभिर्नरोत्तमः । शुश्राव राजमार्गस्थः प्रिया वाच उदाहृताः ॥४२॥
स राघवस्तत्र तदा प्रलापाञ्शुश्राव लोकस्य समागतस्य ।
आत्माधिकारा विविधाश्च वाचः प्रहृष्टरूपस्य पुरे जनस्य ॥४३॥

एष श्रियं गच्छति राघवोऽद्य राजप्रसादाद् विपुलां गमिष्यन् ।
एते वयं सर्वसमृद्धकामा येषामयं नो भविता प्रशास्ता ॥४४॥
लाभो जनस्यास्य यदेष सर्वं प्रपत्स्यते राष्ट्रमिदं चिराय ।
न ह्यप्रियं किंचन जातु कश्चित् पश्येन्न दुःखं मनुजाधिपेऽस्मिन् ॥४५॥
स घोषवद्भिश्च हयैः सनागैः पुरस्सरैः स्वस्तिकसूतमागधैः ।
महीयमानः प्रवरैश्च वादकैरभिष्टुतो वैश्रवणो यथा ययौ ॥४६॥
करेणुमातङ्गरथाश्वसंकुलं महाजनौघैः परिपूर्णचत्वरम् ।
प्रभूतरत्नं बहुपण्यसंचयं ददर्श रामो विमलं महापथम् ॥४७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षोडशः सर्गः ॥ १६ ॥

Taking his seat in the chariot behind Śrī Rāma, with a wonderful *chowrie* in his hand, Lakṣmaṇa, younger brother of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) for his part guarded his (elder) brother, a brother (in the true sense of the word) as he was. Thereupon an uproarious shout of applause rose from the concourse of men that had gathered all round, (even) as the chariot departed on its course. Then excellent horses and (even) so the foremost of elephants looking like mountains followed Śrī Rāma in hundreds and thousands. In front of Śrī Rāma, again, marched mailed warriors daubed with paste of sandalwood and aloe and wielding a sword and bow each and men invoking blessings (on Śrī Rāma). Then were heard on the road (along which Śrī Rāma drove in his chariot) the notes of musical instruments as well as the words of praise uttered by the panegyrists and afterwards the shouts of warriors resembling the roaring of lions. Śrī Rāma (the subduer of his enemies) drove along while being covered on all sides with showers of excellent flowers rained by women decked with jewels and standing at the windows of their mansions. With intent to please Śrī Rāma women who were faultless of every limb and stood in their mansions or on the ground (along the road) extolled him in excellent words (as follows):—"Your mother, Kausalyā, O delighter of your mother, will rejoice to see you installed on the throne of your father and with the object of your visit (to your father) accomplished." (Nay), those women indeed looked upon Sītā, beloved of the heart of Śrī Rāma as the foremost matron of all matrons (and observed): "Surely great asceticism has been duly practised by that lady in her past lives in that she has (in her present birth) attained union with Śrī Rāma (even) as Rohiṇī (wife of the moon-god, the goddess presiding over an asterism of the same name) got united with the moon-god." So did Śrī Rāma (the foremost among men) hear, on the public road, the delightful words uttered by young ladies on the tops of mansions (as well as on the road). (29—42) There (on the road) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) heard on that occasion the talks of visitors (from outside), on various topics (connected with the line of Raghu) as well as the diverse observations concerning himself of the people of Ayodhya (itself), who wore a highly delighted appearance:—(43) "Here goes Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who is about to inherit a great (royal) fortune by the grace of the king. We too shall have all our desires fulfilled in that he shall be our suzerain ruler. (44) This will be our (supreme) gain that Śrī Rāma will for long acquire (sovereignty over) this entire state.

For, so long as he is the ruler of men none will ever undergo any disagreeable experience, much less suffering. (45) Being glorified by Swastikas (who pronounced benedictions by raising shouts of victory), Sūtas (chroniclers) and Māgadhas* (who glorified descent), who marched ahead of him, and extolled by eloquent eulogists, Śrī Rāma drove like Kubera (son of the sage Viśravā) along with neighing horses accompanied by elephants. (46) Śrī Rāma (also) beheld the clean road thronged with elephants in rut and she-elephants, chariots and horses, with their crossings packed to the full by large crowds of men, nay, lined with (shops cantaining) abundant jewels and large stocks of saleable goods. (47)

Thus ends Canto Sixteen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तदशः सर्गः

Canto XVII

Śrī Rāma drives in state to his father's gynaeceum, beholding *en route* the charms of Ayodhya, hearing the blessings and encomia of his friends and relations and ravishing the eyes of all on-lookers, and on reaching his destination sends back his retinue and seeks the presence of his royal father alone.

स रामो रथमास्थाय सम्प्रहृष्टसुहृज्जनः । पताकाध्वजसम्पन्नं महार्हागुरुधूपितम् ॥ १ ॥
अपश्यन्नगरं श्रीमान् नानाजनसमन्वितम् । स गृहैरभ्रसंकाशैः पाण्डुरैरुपशोभितम् ॥ २ ॥
राजमार्गं ययौ रामो मध्येनागुरुधूपितम् । चन्दनानां च मुख्यानामगुरूणां च संचयैः ॥ ३ ॥
उत्तमानां च गन्धानां क्षौमकौशाम्बरस्य च । अविद्धाभिश्च मुक्ताभिरुत्तमैः स्फाटिकैरपि ॥ ४ ॥
शोभमानमसम्बाधं तं राजपथमुत्तमम् । संवृतं विविधैः पुष्पैर्भक्ष्यैरुच्चावचैरपि ॥ ५ ॥
ददर्श तं राजपथं दिवि देवपतिर्यथा । दध्यक्षतहविर्लाजैर्धूपैरगुरुचन्दनैः ॥ ६ ॥
नानामाल्योपगन्धैश्च सदाभ्यर्चितचत्वरम् । आशीर्वादान् बहूञ्शृण्वन् सुहृद्भिः समुदीरितान् ॥ ७ ॥
यथार्हं चापि सम्पूज्य सर्वानेव नरान् ययौ ।

Mounting his chariot, the glorious Śrī Rāma, who brought immense joy to his friends and relations (wherever he went), beheld (from his chariot) the city (of Ayodhya), which was richly provided with buntings and flags, (nay) fumigated with the incense of precious aloe-wood and was crowded with various types of men. (In this way) Śrī Rāma drove through the middle of the road, which was adorned with white houses looking like (so many) clouds and was fumigated with the incense of aloe-wood. Like Indra (the ruler of gods) in heaven, he (also) saw that excellent road, the

---

* The Māgadhas were a mixed class born to a Vaiśya through a Kṣatriya wife—
'मागधः क्षत्रियाविशोः' (Amarakośa).

right royal road, which was uninfested with thieves and robbers and looked charming with (shops containing) heaps of superb sandalwood and aloe-wood and (other) fragrant substances as well as of linen and silk, unpierced pearls and excellent crystals too, (nay) which was heaped (on the margin) with flowers and edibles of various kinds, and whose crossings were ever adorned with curds, grains of unbroken rice, materials worth offering as oblation to the sacred fire, parched grains of paddy, incense of various kinds and paste of sandalwood and aloe-wood and various kinds of flowers and perfumes. Hearing the numerous blessings invoked by friends and duly honouring all men (who invoked such blessings) according to their respective position, Śrī Rāma drove along.

पितामहैराचरितं तथैव प्रपितामहैः ॥ ८ ॥
अद्योपादाय तं मार्गमभिषिक्तोऽनुपालय ।
यथा स्म पोषिताः पित्रा यथा सर्वैः पितामहैः । ततः सुखतरं सर्वे रामे वत्स्याम राजनि ॥ ९ ॥
अलमद्य हि भुक्तेन परमार्थैरलं च नः । यदि पश्याम निर्यान्तं रामं राज्ये प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥१०॥
ततो हि नः प्रियतरं नान्यत् किंचिद् भविष्यति । यथाभिषेको रामस्य राज्येनामिततेजसः ॥११॥

(Addressing Śrī Rāma, they said:—) "Resorting to the well-known path (of righteousness) trodden by your (father and) grandfather and great grandfather, when installed (in the office of Prince Regent) today, keep to it." (Again, they said to one another:—) "When Śrī Rāma is crowned king, we shall all live (even) more happily than we did when we were sustained by his father (King Daśaratha) and by all his forefathers. (1—9) Indeed we shall have no use for enjoyment (of any sort) nor for the varieties of Mokṣa (final beatitude), (only) if we see Śrī Rāma coming out (of the palace of King Daśaratha) after being installed (as Prince Regent) today. (10) For, nothing else will be dearer to us than the installation on the throne of Śrī Rāma, who is invested with immense glory." (11)

एताश्चान्याश्च सुहृदामुदासीनः शुभाः कथाः । आत्मसम्पूजनीः शृण्वन् ययौ रामो महापथम् ॥१२॥
नहि तस्मान्मनः कश्चिच्चक्षुषी वा नरोत्तमात् । नरः शक्नोत्यपाक्रष्टुमतिक्रान्तेऽपि राघवे ॥१३॥
यश्च रामं न पश्येत्तु यं च रामो न पश्यति । निन्दितः सर्वलोकेषु स्वात्माप्येनं विगर्हते ॥१४॥
सर्वेषु स हि धर्मात्मा वर्णानां कुरुते दयाम् । चतुर्णां हि वयःस्थानां तेन ते तमनुव्रताः ॥१५॥
चतुष्पथान् देवपथांश्चैत्यांश्चायतनानि च । प्रदक्षिणं परिहरञ्जगाम नृपतेः सुतः ॥१६॥

Śrī Rāma drove along the main road hearing unconcernedly the aforesaid and other favourable talks of his friends and relations, eulogizing himself. (12) Even when Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) had passed by, no man (much less woman) could turn his mind or eyes away from that jewel among men. (13) He who did not behold Śrī Rāma and whom Śrī Rāma did not notice was indeed despised in the eyes of all men; even his own self would reproach him. (14) Since that pious-minded prince would show compassion, commensurate of course with their age, to all people belonging to the four grades of society (and even outside their pale), they were accordingly devoted to him (in thought, word and deed). (15) The heir apparent drove along leaving cross-roads, temples, places sacred to the tutelary deities of a village and schools to his right (as a token of respect). (16)

स राजकुलमासाद्य मेघसंघोपमैः शुभैः । प्रासादश्रृङ्गैर्विविधैः कैलासशिखरोपमैः ॥१७॥
आवारयद्भिर्गगनं विमानैरिव पाण्डुरैः । वर्धमानगृहैश्चापि रत्नजालपरिष्कृतैः ॥१८॥
तत् पृथिव्यां गृहवरं महेन्द्रसदनोपमम् । राजपुत्रः पितुर्वेश्म प्रविवेश श्रिया ज्वलन् ॥१९॥
स कक्ष्या धन्विभिर्गुप्तास्तिस्रोऽतिक्रम्य वाजिभिः । पदातिरपरे कक्ष्ये द्वे जगाम नरोत्तमः ॥२०॥
स सर्वाः समतिक्रम्य कक्ष्या दशरथात्मजः । संनिवर्त्य जनं सर्वं शुद्धान्तःपुरमत्यगात् ॥२१॥
तस्मिन् प्रविष्टे पितुरन्तिकं तदा जनः स सर्वो मुदितो नृपात्मजे ।
प्रतीक्षते तस्य पुनः स्म निर्गमं यथोदयं चन्द्रमसः सरित्पतिः ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्तदशः सर्गः ॥ १७ ॥

Reaching the royal palace with its beautiful attics of various patterns resembling masses of clouds and vying with the peak of Kailāsa as well as with its (snow-) white pleasure-houses adorned with bunches of precious stones and rising above the sky like (so many) aerial cars, the heir apparent, who was glowing with his (native) splendour, entered the well-known palace of his father, the foremost of (all) mansions on the globe and resembling the palace of the mighty Indra. (17—19) Having passed through (the first) three gates, guarded (as they were) by bowmen, in a chariot drawn by horses, that jewel among men walked through the other two gates on foot. (20) Passing through all the (five) gates and politely sending back all men (who accompanied him) Śrī Rāma, son of Daśaratha, entered the sacred gynaeceum. (21) The aforesaid prince having made his way into the presence of his (royal) father on that occasion, the whole crowd, full of joy, awaited his coming back (from the palace even) as the ocean awaits the rising of the moon. (22)

Thus ends Canto Seventeen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टादशः सर्गः

Canto XVIII

Questioned by Śrī Rāma as to what preyed on his father's mind, Kaikeyī tells him all that had happened in the meantime and sternly urges him to depart for the woods.

स ददर्शासने रामो विषण्णं पितरं शुभे । कैकेय्या सहितं दीनं मुखेन परिशुष्यता ॥ १ ॥
स पितुश्चरणौ पूर्वमभिवाद्य विनीतवत् । ततो ववन्दे चरणौ कैकेय्याः सुसमाहितः ॥ २ ॥
रामेत्युक्त्वा तु वचनं बाष्पपर्याकुलेक्षणः । शशाक नृपतिर्दीनो नेक्षितुं नाभिभाषितुम् ॥ ३ ॥
तदपूर्वं नरपतेर्दृष्ट्वा रूपं भयावहम् । रामोऽपि भयमापन्नः पदा स्पृष्ट्वेव पन्नगम् ॥ ४ ॥
इन्द्रियैरप्रहृष्टैस्तं शोकसंतापकर्शितम् । निःश्वसन्तं महाराजं व्यथिताकुलचेतसम् ॥ ५ ॥
ऊर्मिमालिनमक्षोभ्यं क्षुभ्यन्तमिव सागरम् । उपप्लुतमिवादित्यमुक्तानृतमृषिं यथा ॥ ६ ॥
अचिन्त्यकल्पं नृपतेस्तं शोकमुपधारयन् । बभूव संरब्धतरः समुद्र इव पर्वणि ॥ ७ ॥

चिन्तयामास चतुरो रामः पितृहिते रतः । किंस्विदद्यैव नृपतिर्न मां प्रत्यभिनन्दति ॥ ८ ॥
अन्यदा मां पिता दृष्ट्वा कुपितोऽपि प्रसीदति । तस्य मामद्य सम्प्रेक्ष्य किमायासः प्रवर्तते ॥ ९ ॥
स दीन इव शोकार्तो विषण्णवदनद्युतिः । कैकेयीमभिवाद्यैव रामो वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१०॥

The said Śrī Rāma beheld his father seated on a lovely couch with Kaikeyī, dejected and distressed and marked with a withering face. (1) Bowing first at his father's feet with a modest demeanour, he then laid himself low at Kaikeyī's feet, fully composed in mind. (2) Having barely uttered the word "Rāma", the afflicted monarch could neither cast a look (at him) nor speak, his eyes blinded with tears. (3) Seeing that unusual appearance of the monarch, which gave rise to apprehension, Śrī Rāma too was seized with dismay, (even) as he would no touching a serpent with his foot. (4) He saw the monarch emaciated through grief and agony with his senses divested of joy, sighing with a distressed and perturbed mind and looking like an unruffled ocean getting turbulent with a succession of waves, the sun obscured by an eclipse and a sage that has told a lie. (5-6) Bestowing his thought on the said grief of the monarch, which was almost inconceivable, Śrī Rāma grew extremely agitated as the ocean is on the full moon. (7) The shrewd Śrī Rāma, devoted as he was to the welfare of his father, said to himself, "How on this day alone the emperor does not joyfully respond to my greeting ? (8) On other days my (royal) father would be propitious, even though angry, on seeing me. How is it that he feels agonized to behold me today ?" (9) Like one distressed and stricken with grief and with the lustre of his face overshadowed with melancholy, Śrī Rāma saluted Kaikeyī and spoke to her alone as follows:— (10)

कच्चिन्मया नापराद्धमज्ञानाद् येन मे पिता । कुपितस्तन्ममाचक्ष्व त्वमेवैनं प्रसादय ॥११॥
अप्रसन्नमनाः किं नु सदा मां प्रति वत्सलः । विषण्णवदनो दीनो नहि मां प्रति भाषते ॥१२॥
शारीरो मानसो वापि कच्चिदेनं न बाधते । संतापो वाभितापो वा दुर्लभं हि सदा सुखम् ॥१३॥
कच्चिन्न किंचिद् भरते कुमारे प्रियदर्शने । शत्रुघ्ने वा महासत्त्वे मातॄणां वा ममाशुभम् ॥१४॥
अतोषयन् महाराजमकुर्वन् वा पितुर्वचः । मुहूर्तमपि नेच्छेयं जीवितुं कुपिते नृपे ॥१५॥
यतोमूलं नरः पश्येत् प्रादुर्भावमिहात्मनः । कथं तस्मिन् न वर्तेत प्रत्यक्षे सति दैवते ॥१६॥
कच्चित्ते परुषं किंचिदभिमानात् पिता मम । उक्तो भवत्या रोषेण येनास्य लुलितं मनः ॥१७॥
एतदाचक्ष्व मे देवि तत्त्वेन परिपृच्छतः । किंनिमित्तमपूर्वोऽयं विकारो मनुजाधिपे ॥१८॥

"I hope no offence has been unwittingly committed by me (against my father). (Pray) tell me the reason why father is angry with me. Propitiate him you alone (on my behalf). (11) How, I wonder, is he not cheerful of mind, though ever fond of me ? With his face downcast he does not even speak to me, afflicted as he is. (12) I hope no agony caused by bodily distemper or mental anguish afflicts him; really speaking, everlasting happiness is hard to secure. (13) I hope no offence has been committed (by me) against Prince Bharata of pleasing aspect or Śatrughna possessing great valour or against my mothers. (14) Unable to please the emperor or failing to do my father's bidding and in the event of His Majesty being angry (with me) I would not survive even for an hour or so. (15) How can a man fail to be devoted to his father, his veritable and living deity, to whom he owes his own birth in this world ? (16) (Or) has my father been told by you through vanity or anger a harsh word, by which his heart has been stung to the quick ? (17) What is this unprecedented agitation in the mind of the emperor due to ? (Pray) point this out correctly to me, inquisitive as I am, O godly lady ?" (18)

एवमुक्ता तु कैकेयी राघवेण महात्मना । उवाचेदं सुनिर्लज्जा धृष्टमात्महितं वचः ॥१९॥
न राजा कुपितो राम व्यसनं नास्य किंचन । किंचिन्मनोगतं त्वस्य त्वद्भयान्नानुभाषते ॥२०॥
प्रियं त्वामप्रियं वक्तुं वाणी नास्य प्रवर्तते । तदवश्यं त्वया कार्यं यदनेनाश्रुतं मम ॥२१॥
एष मह्यं वरं दत्त्वा पुरा मामभिपूज्य च । स पश्चात् तप्यते राजा यथान्यः प्राकृतस्तथा ॥२२॥
अतिसृज्य ददानीति वरं मम विशाम्पतिः । स निरर्थं गतजले सेतुं बन्धितुमिच्छति ॥२३॥
धर्ममूलमिदं राम विदितं च सतामपि । तत् सत्यं न त्यजेद् राजा कुपितस्त्वत्कृते यथा ॥२४॥
यदि तद् वक्ष्यते राजा शुभं वा यदि वाशुभम् । करिष्यसि ततः सर्वमाख्यास्यामि पुनस्त्वहम् ॥२५॥
यदि त्वभिहितं राज्ञा त्वयि तन्न विपत्स्यते । ततोऽहमभिधास्यामि नह्येष त्वयि वक्ष्यति ॥२६॥

Questioned thus by the high-souled Rāma (a scion of Raghu), Kaikeyī, for her part, who had grown utterly impudent, made the following bold reply, which was calculated to advance her own interest:—(19) "The king is neither angry nor is there any anguish troubling him, O Rāma ! There is, however, something in his mind, which he is not disclosing (to you) for fear of (paining) you. (20) Words do not proceed from his mouth to tell you, his darling, something disagreeable (to you). That which has been promised by him to me must (however) be implemented by you. (21) Having granted me a boon in the past and (thereby) honoured me, this (illustrious) monarch (now) repents in the same way as any other common man. (22) Having given a pledge to me in the words 'I grant (you) a boon' the celebrated monarch seeks in vain to construct a dam across a stream whose water has already flown. (23) Truth is the root of piety—this is (a fact) well known even to the righteous, O Rāma ! Beware lest the king should forsake that truth, angry as he is (with me) for your sake. (24) If you undertake to implement whatever the king says, whether it is good or evil (for you), in that case of course I shall reiterate everything (to you). (25) In case that which has been uttered by the king does not fall flat on you, then alone I shall give it out (to you). In no case is he going to open his lips before you." (26)

एतत् तु वचनं श्रुत्वा कैकेय्या समुदाहृतम् । उवाच व्यथितो रामस्तां देवीं नृपसंनिधौ ॥२७॥
अहो धिङ् नार्हसे देवि वक्तुं मामीदृशं वचः । अहं हि वचनाद् राज्ञः पतेयमपि पावके ॥२८॥
भक्षयेयं विषं तीक्ष्णं पतेयमपि चार्णवे । नियुक्तो गुरुणा पित्रा नृपेण च हितेन च ॥२९॥
तद् ब्रूहि वचनं देवि राज्ञो यदभिकाङ्क्षितम् । करिष्ये प्रतिजाने च रामो द्विर्नाभिभाषते ॥३०॥

Distressed to hear the afore mentioned words uttered by Kaikeyī, Śrī Rāma for his part spoke (as follows) to the said queen in the presence of the emperor:—(27) "Oh how shameful (it is for me to hear such words expressing doubt about my devotion to my father) ! You ought not to speak such words to me, O glorious lady ! At the bidding of my father I am actually prepared to leap into a fire. (28) Commanded by the emperor, who is my teacher, father and friend (all in one), I might (as well) swallow deadly poison and take a plunge into the ocean. (29) (Therefore) speak out what you have got to say, O glorious lady! I shall do that which is coveted by the king and give my plighted word (for it). (Know that) Rāma does not speak twice." (30)

तमार्जवसमायुक्तमनार्या सत्यवादिनम् । उवाच रामं कैकेयी वचनं भृशदारुणम् ॥३१॥
पुरा देवासुरे युद्धे पित्रा ते मम राघव । रक्षितेन वरौ दत्तौ सशल्येन महारणे ॥३२॥
तत्र मे याचितो राजा भरतस्याभिषेचनम् । गमनं दण्डकारण्ये तव चाद्यैव राघव ॥३३॥
यदि सत्यप्रतिज्ञं त्वं पितरं कर्तुमिच्छसि । आत्मानं च नरश्रेष्ठ मम वाक्यमिदं शृणु ॥३४॥
संनिदेशे पितुस्तिष्ठ यथानेन प्रतिश्रुतम् । त्वयारण्यं प्रवेष्टव्यं नव वर्षाणि पञ्च च ॥३५॥
भरतश्चाभिषिच्येत तदेतदभिषेचनम् । त्वदर्थे विहितं राज्ञा तेन सर्वेण राघव ॥३६॥
सप्त सप्त च वर्षाणि दण्डकारण्यमाश्रितः । अभिषेकमिमं त्यक्त्वा जटाचीरधरो भव ॥३७॥
भरतः कोसलपतेः प्रशास्तु वसुधामिमाम् । नानारत्नसमाकीर्णां सवाजिरथसंकुलाम् ॥३८॥
एतेन त्वां नरेन्द्रोऽयं कारुण्येन समाप्लुतः । शोकैः संक्लिष्टवदनो न शक्नोति निरीक्षितुम् ॥३९॥
एतत् कुरु नरेन्द्रस्य वचनं रघुनन्दन । सत्येन महता राम तारयस्व नरेश्वरम् ॥४०॥
इतीव तस्यां परुषं वदन्त्यां न चैव रामः प्रविवेश शोकम् ।
प्रविव्यथे चापि महानुभावो राजा च पुत्रव्यसनाभितप्तः ॥४१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टादशः सर्गः ॥ १८ ॥

To the said Śrī Rāma, who (always) spoke the truth and was richly adorned with guilelessness, the ignoble Kaikeyī addressed the following exceptionally cruel words :—(31) "Formerly in the course of a conflict between gods and demons, O scion of Raghu, a couple of boons were granted to me by your father, who had been rescued (by me) in a major battle with a shaft (which remained dug into his body and was extracted afterwards by me). (32) As against those boons the king was solicited by me this very day (to acquiesce in) the installation (as Prince Regent) of Bharata and your departure to the Daṇḍaka forest, O scion of Raghu! (33) If you want to prove your father and yourself to be true to your promises, O jewel among men, (please) listen to the following exhortation of mine. (34) Be faithful to the word of your father: as promised by him, you ought to retire to the woods for nine years and five. (35) And let Bharata be consecrated with all the material that has been got together by the king for your consecration, O scion of Raghu! (36) Forgoing the forthcoming installation and ensconced in the Daṇḍaka forest, wear matted locks and the bark of trees for seven and seven years. (37) Let Bharata rule with an iron hand over this globe which is owned by Daśaratha (the king of Ayodhya) and is full of precious stones of various kinds and crowded with chariots driven by horses. (38) Overwhelmed with compassion (for you) due to this circumstance (of having granted a couple of boons in my favour), this monarch cannot (even) gaze at you, his face withered from grief. (39) Implement this pledge of the emperor, O delight of the Raghus! By vindicating his outstanding veracity (pray) deliver the emperor (from a delicate situation)." (40) Even though Kaikeyī spoke unkindly as above, Śrī Rāma did not yield to grief at all. The king, however, even though he was possessed of great strength of mind, felt sore distressed, afflicted as he was by the agony of (impending) separation from his (pet) son. (41)

Thus ends Canto Eighteen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकोनविंशः सर्गः

Canto XIX

Having agreed to leave for the forest, Śrī Rāma proceeds to take leave of his mother Kausalyā.

तदप्रियममित्रध्नो वचनं मरणोपमम् । श्रुत्वा न विव्यथे रामः कैकेयीं चेदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
एवमस्तु गमिष्यामि वनं वस्तुमहं त्वितः । जटाचीरधरो राज्ञः प्रतिज्ञामनुपालयन् ॥ २ ॥
इदं तु ज्ञातुमिच्छामि किमर्थं मां महीपतिः । नाभिनन्दति दुर्धर्षो यथापूर्वमरिंदमः ॥ ३ ॥
मन्युर्न च त्वया कार्यो देवि ब्रूमि तवाग्रतः । यास्यामि भव सुप्रीता वनं चीरजटाधरः ॥ ४ ॥
हितेन गुरुणा पित्रा कृतज्ञेन नृपेण च । नियुज्यमानो विस्रब्धः किं न कुर्यामहं प्रियम् ॥ ५ ॥
अलीकं मानसं त्वेकं हृदयं दहते मम । स्वयं यन्नाह मां राजा भरतस्याभिषेचनम् ॥ ६ ॥
अहं हि सीतां राज्यं च प्राणानिष्टान् धनानि च । हृष्टो भ्रात्रे स्वयं दद्यां भरताय प्रचोदितः ॥ ७ ॥
किं पुनर्मनुजेन्द्रेण स्वयं पित्रा प्रचोदितः । तव च प्रियकामार्थं प्रतिज्ञामनुपालयन् ॥ ८ ॥
तथाऽऽश्वासय ह्रीमन्तं किं त्विदं यन्महीपतिः । वसुधासक्तनयनो मन्दमश्रूणि मुञ्चति ॥ ९ ॥
गच्छन्तु चैवानयितुं दूताः शीघ्रजवैर्हयैः । भरतं मातुलकुलादद्यैव नृपशासनात् ॥ १० ॥
दण्डकारण्यमेषोऽहं गच्छाम्येव हि सत्वरः । अविचार्य पितुर्वाक्यं समा वस्तुं चतुर्दश ॥ ११ ॥

Śrī Rāma, the destroyer of his enemies, did not feel distressed to hear that message, which was (so) unpleasant to hear and was like death (itself), and spoke to Kaikeyī as follows:—(1) "Amen! Honouring the promise made by the king and wearing matted locks and the bark of trees, I will undoubtedly proceed from Ayodhya to the forest to take up my abode (there). (2) I, however, desire to know wherefore His Majesty, who is capable of chastising his enemies and is (himself) hard to assail, does not welcome me as before. (3) Nor should displeasure be shown by you (to me), O queen, because I am putting this question to you. Wearing the bark of trees and matted locks I will (certainly) proceed to the forest. Be fully pleased (with me). (4) Enjoined by the emperor, who is my friend, preceptor and father (all in one) and appreciates a service done (to himself), what kindly act shall I not do unhesitatingly (to him)? (5) One mental anguish, however, galls my heart, *viz*, that His Majesty should not personally speak to me about Bharata's installation. (6) For, commanded by you, I would myself joyfully part with, in favour of Bharata, not only the kingdom (of Ayodhya) and my (personal) property but (even) Sītā (my wedded wife), nay, my beloved life (itself). (7) How much more (gladly) shall I part with (all) these when enjoined by my father, the emperor himself, and (that too) with intent to please you and in order to honour the pledge given by him (to you)? (8) (Therefore) reassure to that effect the bashful monarch. But why should it be that the emperor gently sheds tears with his eyes riveted on the ground ? (9) Nay, let messengers proceed this very day on horses possessing a swift speed under orders of the king in order to bring Bharata from his maternal uncle's home. (10) Here do I actually proceed with quick steps without fail to the Daṇḍaka forest in order to live there for fourteen years, without calling in question the command of my father." (11)

सा हृष्टा तस्य तद् वाक्यं श्रुत्वा रामस्य कैकयी । प्रस्थानं श्रद्दधाना सा त्वरयामास राघवम् ॥१२॥
एवं भवतु यास्यन्ति दूताः शीघ्रजवैर्हयैः । भरतं मातुलकुलादिहावर्तयितुं नराः ॥१३॥
तव त्वहं क्षमं मन्ये नोत्सुकस्य विलम्बनम् । राम तस्मादितः शीघ्रं वनं त्वं गन्तुमर्हसि ॥१४॥
व्रीडान्वितः स्वयं यच्च नृपस्त्वां नाभिभाषते । नैतत् किंचिन्नरश्रेष्ठ मन्युरेषोऽपनीयताम् ॥१५॥
यावत्त्वं न वनं यातः पुरादस्मादतित्वरन् । पिता तावन्न ते राम स्नास्यते भोक्ष्यतेऽपि वा ॥१६॥

The notorious Kaikeyī felt rejoiced to hear that reply of Śrī Rāma. Confident of his departure (to the forest), she urged (in the following words) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) to look sharp:—(12) "Let it be so ! Messengers and (other) men shall depart on horses possessing a swift speed to bring back Bharata from his maternal uncle's abode here. (13) I do not in any case deem it advisable for you to tarry (any longer), keen as you are to depart (for the woods), O Rāma ! Therefore you ought to proceed quickly to the forest from this place. (14) That the king does not speak to you himself, shy as he is (in asking you, his pet son, to relinquish the throne and leave Ayodhya), matters little, O jewel among men ! (So) let this compunction be banished (from your mind). (15) So long as you do not depart post-haste from this city, your father, O Rāma, would neither bathe nor have his breakfast.'' (16)

धिक्कष्टमिति निःश्वस्य राजा शोकपरिप्लुतः । मूर्च्छितो न्यपतत् तस्मिन् पर्यङ्के हेमभूषिते ॥१७॥
रामोऽप्युत्थाप्य राजानं कैकेय्याभिप्रचोदितः । कशयेव हतो वाजी वनं गन्तुं कृतत्वरः ॥१८॥
तदप्रियमनार्याया वचनं दारुणोदयम् । श्रुत्वा गतव्यथो रामः कैकेयीं वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥१९॥
नाहमर्थपरो देवि लोकमावस्तुमुत्सहे । विद्धि मामृषिभिस्तुल्यं विमलं धर्ममास्थितम् ॥२०॥
यत् तत्रभवतः किंचिच्छक्यं कर्तुं प्रियं मया । प्राणानपि परित्यज्य सर्वथा कृतमेव तत् ॥२१॥
नह्यतो धर्मचरणं किंचिदस्ति महत्तरम् । यथा पितरि शुश्रूषा तस्य वा वचनक्रिया ॥२२॥
अनुक्तोऽप्यत्रभवता भवत्या वचनादहम् । वने वत्स्यामि विजने वर्षाणीह चतुर्दश ॥२३॥
न नून मयि कैकेयि किंचिदाशंससे गुणान् । यद् राजानमवोचस्त्वं ममेश्वरतरा सती ॥२४॥
यावन्मातरमापृच्छे सीतां चानुनयाम्यहम् । ततोऽद्यैव गमिष्यामि दण्डकानां महद् वनम् ॥२५॥
भरतः पालयेद् राज्यं शुश्रूषेच्च पितुर्यथा । तथा भवत्या कर्तव्यं स हि धर्मः सनातनः ॥२६॥

Drawing a deep audible breath with the words "What a shame ! How painful !" on his lips, the king, overwhelmed with grief, dropped down unconscious on that couch inlaid with gold. (17) Raising up the king, Śrī Rāma too, when urged on face to face by Kaikeyī, made haste to proceed to the forest (even) as a horse lashed with a whip. (18) Hearing that unpalatable and poignant remark of the impolite lady, Śrī Rāma, who was unknown to anguish, spoke to Kaikeyī as follows:—(19) "I do not desire to live in the world as a slave to material gains. Know me to be devoted to immaculate righteousness like the Ṛṣis,

(20) Whatever is agreeable to my adorable father and capable of being accomplished by me even at the cost of my life has veritably been accomplished in every way. (21) Indeed there is no greater piety than or (even) as good as service to one's father or doing his bidding. (22) At your command, though not (directly) enjoined by my revered father, I shall live in a lonely forest on this globe for fourteen years. (23) Surely you do not cognize any good point in me since you had to speak to my father (about such a trivial thing), though you have greater authority* over me (even than my father), O princess of Kekaya! (24) (Pray) bear with me till I take leave of my mother (Kausalyā) and win Sītā to consent. Then I shall proceed to the great forest of Daṇḍaka† this very day. (25) An attempt should be made by you to see that Bharata protects the kingdom (from internal disorder and foreign aggression) and serves his (aged) father; for such is the eternal code of morality." (26)

रामस्य तु वचः श्रुत्वा भृशं दुःखगतः पिता । शोकादशक्नुवन् वक्तुं प्ररुरोद महास्वनम् ॥२७॥
वन्दित्वा चरणौ राज्ञो विसंज्ञस्य पितुस्तदा । कैकेय्याश्चाप्यनार्याया निष्पपात महाद्युतिः ॥२८॥
स रामः पितरं कृत्वा कैकेयीं च प्रदक्षिणम् । निष्क्रम्यान्तःपुरात् तस्मात् स्वं ददर्श सुहृज्जनम् ॥२९॥
तं बाष्पपरिपूर्णाक्षः पृष्ठतोऽनुजगाम ह । लक्ष्मणः परमक्रुद्धः सुमित्रानन्दवर्धनः ॥३०॥
आभिषेचनिकं भाण्डं कृत्वा रामः प्रदक्षिणम् । शनैर्जगाम सापेक्षो दृष्टिं तत्राविचालयन् ॥३१॥
न चास्य महतीं लक्ष्मीं राज्यनाशोऽपकर्षति । लोककान्तस्य कान्तत्वाच्छीतरश्मेरिव क्षयः ॥३२॥
न वनं गन्तुकामस्य त्यजतश्च वसुंधराम् । सर्वलोकातिगस्येव लक्ष्यते चित्तविक्रिया ॥३३॥

Sore distressed to hear Śrī Rāma's utterance, and unable to speak because of grief, his father for his part wept bitterly at the pitch of his voice. (27) Bowing at the feet of his royal father, who was lying unconscious (even) then, as well as of the ignoble Kaikeyī, Śrī Rāma (who was possessed of immense glory) departed. (28) Going clockwise round his father as well as Kaikeyī and coming out of the said gynaeceum, the celebrated Śrī Rāma saw his friends (standing at the gate). (29) Highly enraged, Lakṣmaṇa, who enhanced the joy of (his mother) Sumitrā, followed at his heels, so the tradition goes, his eyes brimful with tears. (30) Going clockwise round the vessel containing the requisites for the (projected) consecration, Śrī Rāma moved slowly along without casting his eyes on it, keen as he was to leave the place. (31) Loss of sovereignty, however, did not detract (in the least) from his extraordinary splendour because of his being (naturally) pleasing (of aspect), any more than the waning of (the orb of) the moon (distinguished by its cool rays), which is delightful to the world, detracts from the latter's charm. (32) No change of mood was perceived in him,—any more than in a (master-) yogi who surpasses all (common) men (because of his having risen above all pairs of opposites),—even though he was ready to retire to the woods and was renouncing the sovereignty to the (entire) globe. (33)

---

* Here Śrī Rāma evidently has the following dictum of Manu in mind:—

पितुर्दशगुणा माता गौरवेणातिरिच्यते ।

"A mother is ten times superior to one's father in respectability."

† What then went by the name of the Daṇḍaka forest was at one time a principality ruled over by a Kṣatriya clan known by the name of the Daṇḍakas, who claimed their descent from Daṇḍa, son of Ikṣwāku. The tract, which was bounded on the north by the Narmada and on the south by the Godavari, was laid waste through a shower of dust under a curse pronounced by Sage Śukra.

प्रतिषिध्य शुभं छत्रं व्यजने च स्वलंकृते । विसर्जयित्वा स्वजनं रथं पौरांस्तथा जनान् ॥३४॥
धारयन् मनसा दुःखमिन्द्रियाणि निगृह्य च । प्रविवेशात्मवान् वेश्म मातुरप्रियशंसिवान् ॥३५॥
सर्वोऽप्यभिजनः श्रीमाञ् श्रीमतः सत्यवादिनः । नालक्षयत रामस्य कंचिदाकारमानने ॥३६॥
उचितं च महाबाहुर्न जहौ हर्षमात्मवान् । शारदः समुदीर्णांशुश्चन्द्रस्तेज इवात्मजम् ॥३७॥
वाचा मधुरया रामः सर्वं सम्मानयञ्जनम् । मातुः समीपं धर्मात्मा प्रविवेश महायशाः ॥३८॥
तं गुणैः समतां प्राप्तो भ्राता विपुलविक्रमः । सौमित्रिरनुवव्राज धारयन् दुःखमात्मजम् ॥३९॥
प्रविश्य वेश्मातिभृशं मुदा युतं समीक्ष्य तां चार्थविपत्तिमागताम् ।
न चैव रामोऽत्र जगाम विक्रियां सुहृज्जनस्यात्मविपत्तिशङ्कया ॥४०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकोनविंशः सर्गः ॥ १९ ॥

Forbidding the use of the beautiful umbrella as well as of a pair of richly adorned *chowries* and sending away his own people, the chariot and the citizens, nay, inhibiting his agony (caused by the agony of his own people) with his mind and controlling his senses, Śrī Rāma (who had full mastery over his self) entered his mother's apartments in order to break the unpalatable news (to her). (34-35) Everyone around him, who looked smart, did not notice any change in the looks of the glorious and truthful Śrī Rāma. (36) The mighty-armed Śrī Rāma (who was noted for his self-control) did not shed his characteristic and native joy any more than the autumnal moon with its intensely bright rays loses its natural splendour. (37) Duly honouring all men with his suave speech, the highly illustrious Śrī Rāma (whose mind was given to piety) entered the presence of his mother. (38) Controlling the agony caused in his mind (by the interruption of Śrī Rāma's installation and the news of his impending exile), his (younger) brother, Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), who had attained equality with Śrī Rāma by virtue of his excellences and was possessed of great prowess, followed him. (39) Entering the palace (of Kausalyā), (which was) full of immense joy (at the projected installation of Śrī Rāma), Śrī Rāma did not undergo any change of mood at all even on perceiving that loss of (worldly) fortune, that had come upon him at this moment, for fear of bringing about the loss of life of his near and dear ones. (40)

Thus ends Canto Nineteen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa
of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

विंशः सर्गः

Canto XX

Even as Śrī Rāma issued forth from the palace of Queen Kaikeyī, the inmates of the gynaeceum burst into a piteous wail, extolling the prince's virtues. Mother Kausalyā embraces and pronounces her benedictions on Śrī Rāma as the latter approaches her and falls at her feet. On being apprised of the circumstances that had brought him there, she falls to the ground overwhelmed with grief, and weeps bitterly expressing her deep sorrow.

तस्मिंस्तु पुरुषव्याघ्रे निष्क्रामति कृताञ्जलौ । आर्तशब्दो महाञ्जज्ञे स्त्रीणामन्तःपुरे तदा ॥ १ ॥
कृत्येष्वचोदितः पित्रा सर्वस्यान्तःपुरस्य च । गतिश्च शरणं चासीत् स रामोऽद्य प्रवत्स्यति ॥ २ ॥
कौसल्यायां यथा युक्तो जनन्यां वर्तते सदा । तथैव वर्ततेऽस्मासु जन्मप्रभृति राघवः ॥ ३ ॥
न क्रुध्यत्यभिशप्तोऽपि क्रोधनीयानि वर्जयन् । क्रुद्धान् प्रसादयन् सर्वान् स इतोऽद्य प्रवत्स्यति ॥ ४ ॥
अबुद्धिर्बत नो राजा जीवलोकं चरत्ययम् । यो गतिं सर्वभूतानां परित्यजति राघवम् ॥ ५ ॥
इति सर्वा महिष्यस्ता विवत्सा इव धेनवः । पतिमाचुक्रुशुश्चापि सस्वनं चापि चुक्रुशुः ॥ ६ ॥
स हि चान्तःपुरे घोरमार्तशब्दं महीपतिः । पुत्रशोकाभिसंतप्तः श्रुत्वा व्यालीयतासने ॥ ७ ॥

The moment Śrī Rāma, a veritable tiger among men, issued forth (from the gynaeceum), with joined palms, a loud and pathetic lament arose from the mouth of the ladies of the gynaeceum: (1) "The same Śrī Rāma who used to attend to all the affairs of the gynaeceum unenjoined by his father and who was our resort and protector (till now) will go into exile today! (2) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) has since his (very) birth ever been attentive to us precisely to the same degree as he is to his mother, Kausalyā. (3) He who did not feel angry even though spoken harshly to, avoided words provoking anger (in others) and appeased all who were angry with him will go into exile from this place today! (4) Alas! This foolish king of ours, who is forgoing Śrī Rāma, the support of all living beings, is bringing destruction to the (entire) living creation." (5) In this way all those queens not only decried their husband but also wailed loudly like cows bereft of their calves. (6) Hearing the frightful and piteous wail in the gynaeceum, the king, who was sore stricken with grief over the (impending) separation from his (eldest) son, actually hid himself (under the bed-sheets) in the couch (for sheer shame and woe). (7)

रामस्तु भृशमायस्तो निःश्वसन्निव कुञ्जरः । जगाम सहितो भ्रात्रा मातुरन्तःपुरं वशी ॥ ८ ॥
सोऽपश्यत् पुरुषं तत्र वृद्धं परमपूजितम् । उपविष्टं गृहद्वारि तिष्ठतश्चापरान् बहून् ॥ ९ ॥
दृष्ट्वैव तु तदा रामं ते सर्वे समुपस्थिताः । जयेन जयतां श्रेष्ठं वर्धयन्ति स्म राघवम् ॥ १० ॥
प्रविश्य प्रथमां कक्ष्यां द्वितीयायां ददर्श सः । ब्राह्मणान् वेदसम्पन्नान् वृद्धान् राज्ञाभिसत्कृतान् ॥ ११ ॥

प्रणम्य रामस्तान् वृद्धांस्तृतीयायां ददर्श सः । स्त्रियो बालाश्च वृद्धाश्च द्वाररक्षणतत्पराः ॥१२॥
वर्धयित्वा प्रहृष्टास्ताः प्रविश्य च गृहं स्त्रियः । न्यवेदयन्त त्वरितं राममातुः प्रियं तदा ॥१३॥
कौसल्यापि तदा देवी रात्रिं स्थित्वा समाहिता । प्रभाते चाकरोत् पूजां विष्णोः पुत्रहितैषिणी ॥१४॥
सा क्षौमवसना हृष्टा नित्यं व्रतपरायणा । अग्निं जुहोति स्म तदा मन्त्रवत् कृतमङ्गला ॥१५॥

Deeply afflicted (to find his near and dear ones plunged in grief), Śrī Rāma, who was noted for his self-control, proceeded, for his part, to his mother's apartments along with his (younger) brother (Lakṣmaṇa), drawing a deep audible breath like an elephant. (8) He saw seated at the entrance of (the section of) the gynaeceum (reserved for Kausalyā) the aged and most respected chief of porters and many other porters standing. (9) The moment they beheld Śrī Rāma all flocked to his side and hailed the scion of Raghu, the foremost of the victorious, with shouts of victory. (10) Having passed through the first gate, he saw at the second elderly Brahmans well-versed in the Vedas and highly respected by the emperor. (11) Bowing low to the aforesaid elders Śrī Rāma beheld at the third gate females and girls as well as aged men intent upon guarding the entrance. (12) Felicitating the prince (on his projected installation as Prince Regent) and entering the chamber (occupied by Empress Kausalyā), the women, who felt extremely delighted (to behold Śrī Rāma), promptly broke the delightful news to Śrī Rāma's mother on that occasion. (13) Having passed the night in religious observances, Queen Kausalyā for her part had started offering worship to Lord Viṣṇu (seated in the orb of the sun) at day break, wishing well of her son. (14) Having performed (some) propitious rites, Kausalyā, who was clad in silk and was ever given to sacred observances, was causing oblations to be poured (by the priests) into the sacred fire at that time with the chanting of sacred texts. (15)

प्रविश्य तु तदा रामो मातुरन्तःपुरं शुभम् । ददर्श मातरं तत्र हावयन्तीं हुताशनम् ॥१६॥
देवकार्यनिमित्तं च तत्रापश्यत् समुद्यतम् । दध्यक्षतघृतं चैव मोदकान् हविषस्तथा ॥१७॥
लाजान् माल्यानि शुक्लानि पायसं कृसरं तथा । समिधः पूर्णकुम्भांश्च ददर्श रघुनन्दनः ॥१८॥
तां शुक्लक्षौमसंवीतां व्रतयोगेन कर्शिताम् । तर्पयन्तीं ददर्शाद्भिर्देवतां वरवर्णिनीम् ॥१९॥
सा चिरस्यात्मजं दृष्ट्वा मातृनन्दनमागतम् । अभिचक्राम संहृष्टा किशोरं वडवा यथा ॥२०॥
स मातरमुपक्रान्तामुपसंगृह्य राघवः । परिष्वक्तश्च बाहुभ्यामवघ्रातश्च मूर्धनि ॥२१॥
तमुवाच दुराधर्षं राघवं सुतमात्मनः । कौसल्या पुत्रवात्सल्यादिदं प्रियहितं वचः ॥२२॥
वृद्धानां धर्मशीलानां राजर्षीणां महात्मनाम् । प्राप्नुह्यायुश्च कीर्तिं च धर्मं चाप्युचितं कुले ॥२३॥
सत्यप्रतिज्ञं पितरं राजानं पश्य राघव । अद्यैव त्वां स धर्मात्मा यौवराज्येऽभिषेक्ष्यति ॥२४॥

Entering forthwith the beautiful chamber of Kausalyā (his mother), Śrī Rāma actually saw there his mother causing oblations to be poured into the sacred fire. (16) He also saw kept ready at hand for the worship of the gods there curds, unbroken grains of rice and ghee as well as balls of sweetmeat and oblations to be poured into the sacred fire. (17) Śrī Rāma (the delight of the Raghus) further beheld parched grains of paddy, white flowers, milk boiled with rice and sugar, rice cooked with sesame seeds, sticks of sacrificial wood and jars full of rice. (18) He saw the fair-complexioned Kausalyā clad in white silk and emaciated through persevering in fasting and gratifying the Deity with (an offering of) water. (19) Overjoyed to behold her son, the delight of his mother, come (to her) after a long time, she went forward (to meet him) as a mare would run to meet her foal. (20) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) stood clinging to his mother (with his arms placed round her neck) as she approached him and was (in return) folded in her arms and smelt at the head (as a token of motherly affection). (21) Out of affection for her son Kausalyā addressed the following delightful and (at the same time) wholesome words (a rare combination) to her son, the celebrated Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who was hard to assail :—(22) "May you attain the age and renown of ancient royal sages of virtuous conduct and possessing a noble soul, and acquire virtue worthy of your race! (23) (Please go and) see, O scion of Raghu, your royal father, who is true to his promise. That pious soul is going to install you in the office of Prince Regent this very day." (24)

दत्तमासनमालभ्य भोजनेन निमन्त्रितः । मातरं राघवः किंचित् प्रसार्याञ्जलिमब्रवीत् ॥२५॥
स स्वभावविनीतश्च गौरवाच्च तथानतः । प्रस्थितो दण्डकारण्यमाप्रष्टुमुपचक्रमे ॥२६॥
देवि नूनं न जानीषे महद् भयमुपस्थितम् । इदं तव च दुःखाय वैदेह्या लक्ष्मणस्य च ॥२७॥
गमिष्ये दण्डकारण्यं किमनेनासनेन मे । विष्टरासनयोग्यो हि कालोऽयं मामुपस्थितः ॥२८॥
चतुर्दश हि वर्षाणि वत्स्यामि विजने वने । कंदमूलफलैर्जीवन् हित्वा मुनिवदामिषम् ॥२९॥
भरताय महाराजो यौवराज्यं प्रयच्छति । मां पुनर्दण्डकारण्यं विवासयति तापसम् ॥३०॥
स षट् चाष्टौ च वर्षाणि वत्स्यामि विजने वने । आसेवमानो वन्यानि फलमूलैश्च वर्तयन् ॥३१॥

(Merely) touching the seat offered (by the empress), when invited to breakfast, and distending a bit the hollow of his joined palms, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) began to speak (as follows). Nay, about to start on his (long) journey to the Daṇḍaka forest, Śrī Rāma who was modest by nature and was likewise bent low with reverence, proceeded to take leave (of his mother in the following words) :—"Surely you do not know, O godly lady, that a great calamity is imminent. What I am going to reveal (to you) will cause you agony no less than to Sītā (a princess of Videha) and Lakṣmaṇa. (25—27) I am (just) going to proceed to the Daṇḍaka forest; what shall I do with this (bejewelled) seat? Time has now arrived for me to occupy a mat of Kuśa grass*. (28) Indeed for fourteen years I shall actually live in a lonely forest, subsisting like ascetics on bulbs, roots and fruits and giving up royal fare†. (29) The emperor is conferring the office of Prince Regent on Bharata and exiling me to the Daṇḍaka forest as an ascetic on the other hand. (30) As such I shall live in a lonely forest for six years and eight, wearing the barks of wild trees and living on fruits and roots." (31)

सा निकृत्तेव सालस्य यष्टिः परशुना वने । पपात सहसा देवी देवतेव दिवश्च्युता ॥३२॥
तामदुःखोचितां दृष्ट्वा पतितां कदलीमिव । रामस्तूत्थापयामास मातरं गतचेतसम् ॥३३॥

---

* According to Smṛti texts a mat made of twenty-five blades of Kuśa grass is called a 'Viṣṭara' :

पञ्चाशद्भिर्भवेद् ब्रह्मा तदर्धेन तु विष्टरः ।

† आकर्षणेऽपि पुंसि स्यादामिषं पुंनपुंसकम् । भोग्यवस्तुनि सम्भोगेऽप्युत्कोचे पललेऽपि च ॥—इति मेदिनी

उपावृत्त्योत्थितां दीनां वडवामिव वाहिताम् । पांसुगुण्ठितसर्वाङ्गीं विममर्श च पाणिना ॥३४॥
सा राघवमुपासीनमसुखार्ता सुखोचिता । उवाच पुरुषव्याघ्रमुपशृण्वति लक्ष्मणे ॥३५॥

(Hearing this unpalatable news) the said queen fell all at once (to the ground) like a bough of a fir tree in the forest severed with an axe, and (lying unconscious) shone like a goddess fallen from heaven. (32) Seeing his mother, who did not deserve suffering, fallen unconscious like a banana tree, Śrī Rāma for his part lifted her up. (33) Nay, he brushed the dust with his own hands off (the person of) his distressed mother, who had all her limbs covered with it like a mare that had been made to carry a (heavy) load and had (just) risen after rolling (on the ground). (34) Stricken with agony, Kausalyā, who deserved happiness, spoke (as follows) to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), a tiger among men, standing by her side, within the hearing of Lakṣmaṇa:—(35)

यदि पुत्र न जायेथा मम शोकाय राघव । न स्म दुःखमतो भूयः पश्येयमहमप्रजाः ॥३६॥
एक एव हि वन्ध्यायाः शोको भवति मानसः । अप्रजास्मीति संतापो नह्यन्यः पुत्र विद्यते ॥३७॥
न दृष्टपूर्वं कल्याणं सुखं वा पतिपौरुषे । अपि पुत्रे विपश्येयमिति रामास्थितं मया ॥३८॥
सा बहून्यमनोज्ञानि वाक्यानि हृदयच्छिदाम् । अहं श्रोष्ये सपत्नीनामवराणां परा सती ॥३९॥
अतो दुःखतरं किं नु प्रमदानां भविष्यति । मम शोको विलापश्च यादृशोऽयमनन्तकः ॥४०॥
त्वयि संनिहितेऽप्येवमहमासं निराकृता । किं पुनः प्रोषिते तात ध्रुवं मरणमेव हि ॥४१॥
अत्यन्तं निगृहीतास्मि भर्तुर्नित्यमसम्मता । परिवारेण कैकेय्याः समा वाप्यथवावरा ॥४२॥
यो हि मां सेवते कश्चिदपि वाप्यनुवर्तते । कैकेय्याः पुत्रमन्वीक्ष्य स जनो नाभिभाषते ॥४३॥
नित्यक्रोधतया तस्याः कथं नु खरवादि तत् । कैकेय्या वदनं द्रष्टुं पुत्र शक्ष्यामि दुर्गता ॥४४॥
दश सप्त च वर्षाणि जातस्य तव राघव । अतीतानि प्रकाङ्क्षन्त्या मया दुःखपरिक्षयम् ॥४५॥
तदक्षयं महद् दुःखं नोत्सहे सहितुं चिरात् । विप्रकारं सपत्नीनामेवं जीर्णापि राघव ॥४६॥
अपश्यन्ती तव मुखं परिपूर्णशशिप्रभम् । कृपणा वर्तयिष्यामि कथं कृपणजीविका ॥४७॥
उपवासैश्च योगैश्च बहुभिश्च परिश्रमैः । दुःखसंवर्धितो मोघं त्वं हि दुर्गतया मया ॥४८॥
स्थिरं नु हृदयं मन्ये ममेदं यन्न दीर्यते । प्रावृषीव महानद्याः स्पृष्टं कूलं नवाम्भसा ॥४९॥

"Had you not been born, my son, this would have (certainly) caused grief to me (in the shape of issuelessness), O scion of Raghu ! Even if childless, I would not have experienced (the present) agony (caused by separation from a grown up and married son), greater than the former. (36) Indeed there is only one mental anguish for a barren woman—the feeling that she is issueless; there is certainly no other agony (to her), my son ! (37) No good fortune or happiness was enjoyed by me in the past through the effort of my husband. Hope was, however, entertained by me, O Rāma, that with my son in power I might see both in abundance. (38) Seniormost though I am (of all the queens) I shall in my present plight (as separated from you) hear many unpalatable words from my junior co-wives, who will rend my heart (thereby). (39) What can possibly be more painful than this for the fair sex ? The kind of grief and lamentation that has now fallen to my lot is unending. (40) Even with you by my side I have been despised; how much more shall I be despised when you are away, O dear child ? Surely my death is but inevitable. (41) Not esteemed by my husband I have always been greatly snubbed (by him). I have been treated on a par with or even on a lower footing than Kaikeyī's servants ! (42) Whosoever serves me or even speaks kindly to me would no longer speak to me on perceiving Bharata. (43) Reduced to a bad plight, my son, how shall I possibly be able to cast my eyes on those lips of Kaikeyī uttering harsh words due to her being constantly angry ? (44) Ten and seven years have been spent by me since you were born (for a second time in the shape of investiture* with the sacred thread), keenly desiring the end of woes, O scion of Raghu ! (45) Though worn out (with age) I am unable to suffer for a long time that great agony, in the shape of the contumely of my co-wives, which knows no end, O scion of Raghu ! (46) Unable to behold your countenance possessing the splendour of the full moon, and dragging a wretched existence, how shall I survive, distressed as I (already) am ? (47) In vain indeed have you been brought up through (great) hardship with the help of a number of fasts and meditations (on the various gods) involving (much) toil, unlucky as I am. (48) I conclude this heart of mine to be hard enough inasmuch as it does not get riven any more than the bank of a large river (like the holy Ganga) even though washed by the new waters in the rainy season. (49)

ममैव नूनं मरणं न विद्यते न चावकाशोऽस्ति यमक्षये मम ।
यदन्तकोऽद्यैव न मां जिहीर्षति प्रसह्य सिंहो रुदतीं मृगीमिव ॥५०॥
स्थिरं हि नूनं हृदयं ममायसं न भिद्यते यद् भुवि नो विदीर्यते ।
अनेन दुःखेन च देहमर्पितं ध्रुवं ह्यकाले मरणं न विद्यते ॥५१॥
इदं तु दुःखं यदनर्थकानि मे व्रतानि दानानि च संयमाश्च हि ।
तपश्च तप्तं यदपत्यकाम्यया सुनिष्फलं बीजमिवोप्तमूषरे ॥५२॥
यदि ह्यकाले मरणं यदृच्छया लभेत कश्चिद् गुरुदुःखकर्शितः ।
गताहमद्यैव परेतसंसदं विना त्वया धेनुरिवात्मजेन वै ॥५३॥
अथापि किं जीवितमद्य मे वृथा त्वया विना चन्द्रनिभाननप्रभ ।
अनुव्रजिष्यामि वनं त्वयैव गौः सुदुर्बला वत्समिवाभिकाङ्क्षया ॥५४॥

"Surely there is no death for me nor is there room for me in the abode of Yama (the god of punishment), as (is evident from the fact that) Death does not feel inclined to carry me away by force as a lion would carry away a wailing doe. (50) My hard heart is most certainly made of steel inasmuch as it does not break (under pressure of grief) nor is the body, overcome with this anguish, torn into pieces (even) on falling to the ground. Undoubtedly death does not come out of time. (51) This is all the more painful that my sacred observances and gifts as well as courses of self-discipline are of no use and the asceticism practised with intent to do good to my child has proved utterly unfructuous like a seed sown in barren soil. (52) If any one afflicted with great suffering could meet with death at one's sweet will even before time I would certainly, like a cow bereft of its calf, depart to the court of Yama in your absence this very day. (53) Even if there is no death, life without you is of no consequence and therefore useless, O Rāma (wearing a moon-like splendour on your countenance)! Though very feeble I shall, therefore, like a cow following its calf through ardent longing, definitely proceed with you to the forest." (54)

---

* A reference to I. xx 2 on p. 73-74 of Vālmiki-Rāmāyaṇa Number-I would reveal that according to King Daśaratha himself Śrī Rāma was less than sixteen years, *i. e.*, fifteen years of age when he accompanied the sage Viśvāmitra and was eventually married with Sītā. It is mentioned in the Padma-Purāṇa that he had spent twelve years of his married life before the emperor proclaimed his intention of installing him on the throne as Prince Regent—

तत्र द्वादश वर्षाणि राघवः सह सीतया । रमयामास धर्मात्मा नारायण इव श्रिया ॥
तस्मिन् काले महाराजः प्रीतो रामस्य सद्गुणैः । ज्येष्ठं राज्येन संयोक्तुमैच्छत् सर्वनृपाज्ञया ॥
(Uttara., cclxix. 181—83)

Śrī Rāma could not therefore be only seventeen years of age at the time of his exile. Hence the word 'जातस्य' in the above verse has been taken in the sense of 'born for a second time' in the form of investiture with the sacred thread, which must have presumably taken place at the age of ten inasmuch as it is laid down in the Smṛtis that a Kṣatriya boy must be invested with the sacred thread at the age of ten to eleven years—एकादशे वा राजन्यम्. According to the above interpretation Śrī Rāma can be safely concluded to be seventeen plus ten or twenty-seven years of age at the time of his leaving for the forest.

भृशमसुखममर्षिता तदा बहु विललाप समीक्ष्य राघवम् ।
व्यसनमुपनिशाम्य सा महत् सुतमिव बद्धमवेक्ष्य किंनरी ॥५५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे विंशः सर्गः ॥ २० ॥

Pondering over the terrible calamity (that was going to befall her as a result of her son's exile) and perceiving Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) bound (by a sense of duty to his father), Kausalyā, who was unable to bear the intense suffering, wailed a lot (even) as a Kinnara woman would on finding her son made captive. (55)

Thus ends Canto Twenty in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXI

Consoling Kausalyā in her grief over the impending exile of Śrī Rāma, Prince Lakṣmaṇa opposes the idea of Śrī Rāma's leaving for the forest and, censuring Daśaratha, makes up his mind to accompany his eldest brother. Kausalyā too deters Śrī Rāma from going into exile, branding Kaikeyī's command as unjust. Śrī Rāma, however, justifies the command on the ground of its being countenanced by the emperor and requests his mother to grant him leave and perform auspicious rites connected with his departure.

तथा तु विलपन्तीं तां कौसल्यां राममातरम् । उवाच लक्ष्मणो दीनस्तत्कालसदृशं वचः ॥ १ ॥
न रोचते ममाप्येतदार्ये यद् राघवो वनम् । त्यक्त्वा राज्यश्रियं गच्छेत् स्त्रिया वाक्यवशंगतः ॥ २ ॥

विपरीतश्च वृद्धश्च विषयैश्च प्रधर्षितः । नृपः किमिव न ब्रूयाच्चोद्यमानः समन्मथः ॥ ३ ॥
नास्यापराधं पश्यामि नापि दोषं तथाविधम् । येन निर्वास्यते राष्ट्राद् वनवासाय राघवः ॥ ४ ॥
न तं पश्याम्यहं लोके परोक्षमपि यो नरः । स्वमित्रोऽपि निरस्तोऽपि योऽस्य दोषमुदाहरेत् ॥ ५ ॥
देवकल्पमृजुं दान्तं रिपूणामपि वत्सलम् । अवेक्षमाणः को धर्मं त्यजेत् पुत्रमकारणात् ॥ ६ ॥
तदिदं वचनं राज्ञः पुनर्बाल्यमुपेयुषः । पुत्रः को हृदये कुर्याद् राजवृत्तमनुस्मरन् ॥ ७ ॥
यावदेव न जानाति कश्चिदर्थमिमं नरः । तावदेव मया सार्धमात्मस्थं कुरु शासनम् ॥ ८ ॥
मया पार्श्वे सधनुषा तव गुप्तस्य राघव । कः समर्थोऽधिकं कर्तुं कृतान्तस्येव तिष्ठतः ॥ ९ ॥
निर्मनुष्यामिमां सर्वामयोध्यां मनुजर्षभ । करिष्यामि शरैस्तीक्ष्णैर्यदि स्थास्यति विप्रिये ॥१०॥
भरतस्याथ पक्ष्यो वा यो वास्य हितमिच्छति । सर्वांस्तांश्च वधिष्यामि मृदुर्हि परिभूयते ॥११॥
प्रोत्साहितोऽयं कैकेय्या संतुष्टो यदि नः पिता । अमित्रभूतो निस्सङ्गं वध्यतां बध्यतामपि ॥१२॥
गुरोरप्यवलिप्तस्य कार्याकार्यमजानतः । उत्पथं प्रतिपन्नस्य कार्यं भवति शासनम् ॥१३॥
बलमेष किमाश्रित्य हेतुं वा पुरुषोत्तम । दातुमिच्छति कैकेय्यै उपस्थितमिदं तव ॥१४॥
त्वया चैव मया चैव कृत्वा वैरमनुत्तमम् । कास्य शक्तिः श्रियं दातुं भरतायारिशासन ॥१५॥
अनुरक्तोऽस्मि भावेन भ्रातरं देवि तत्त्वतः । सत्येन धनुषा चैव दत्तेनेष्टेन ते शपे ॥१६॥
दीप्तमग्निमरण्यं वा यदि रामः प्रवेक्ष्यति । प्रविष्टं तत्र मां देवि त्वं पूर्वमवधारय ॥१७॥
हरामि वीर्याद् दुःखं ते तमः सूर्य इवोदितः । देवी पश्यतु मे वीर्यं राघवश्चैव पश्यतु ॥१८॥
हनिष्ये पितरं वृद्धं कैकेय्यासक्तमानसम् । कृपणं च स्थितं बाल्ये वृद्धभावेन गर्हितम् ॥१९॥

Feeling miserable (over the situation), Lakṣmaṇa for his part made the following submission, suited to that occasion, to Kausalyā, mother of Śrī Rāma, who was wailing as aforesaid :— (1) "To me either it does not appeal, O worthy lady, that Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) should proceed to the forest relinquishing the royal fortune. Dominated by the words of a woman, the king has become perverse and is full of lust, senile and overpowered by (his love for) the pleasures of sense. What will he not say, when urged by Kaikeyī ? (2-3) I do not perceive in Śrī Rāma any such offence (against the king) nor any vice for which Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) should be exiled from the state to take up his abode in a forest. (4) I find no such man in the world who may point out Śrī Rāma's fault even in his absence—not even the man who is his deadly enemy or has been vanquished by him. (5) What man having regard for virtue would forsake without any cause a son who stands on a par with the gods, is guileless, disciplined and fond even of his enemies ? (6) What son having an eye to statesmanship would heed such a command of a king who has attained a second childhood (in the shape of dotage) ?" (7) (Addressing Śrī Rāma, he continued :—) "Before any individual comes to know this fact (of the king having decided to send you into exile) take the (reins of) administration in your hands with my help (after duly installing yourself as Prince Regent). (8) Before you standing as death, guarded by me, stationed beside you, bow in hand, who will be able to exhibit greater valour, O scion of Raghu ? (9) If (the city of) Ayodhya stands in opposition (to you), I shall depopulate the entire city by means of my sharp-pointed shafts, O jewel among men ! (10) Nay, whosoever is a supporter of Bharata and whoever seeks to advance his interests, I shall kill them all; for he (alone) who is meek is subjected to contumely. (11) If pleased with Kaikeyī and instigated by her, our royal father, behaves as an enemy, let him be made captive or even got rid of without (the least) attachment. (12) Coercion has to be resorted to even with reference to a father or teacher who being puffed up with pride has ceased to distinguish between that which ought to be done and what ought not to be done and has taken to the evil path. (13) On what authority or ground, O jewel among men, does he seek to confer on (the son of) Kaikeyī this kingdom, which has (as a matter of right) devolved on you ? (14) What power has he to bestow royal fortune on Bharata entering into bitter enmity with you as well as with me, O chastiser of foes ?" (15) (Turning again to Kausalyā he said:—) "I swear to you by my bow as well as by the merit attained by me through truthfulness, charity and worship of gods that I am truly devoted to my (eldest) brother with the core of my heart, O godly lady ! (16) If Śrī Rāma enters a blazing fire or retires to the forest, know me, O glorious lady, as having already entered the same. (17) I shall (presently) dispel your sorrow by dint of my prowess (even) as the sun when risen drives away darkness. Let Your Majesty as well as Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) witness my valour. (18) I shall kill my aged and wretched father, whose mind is attached to Kaikeyī and who is going through his (second) childhood as a result of his senility and has (accordingly) grown contemptible." (19)

एतत् तु वचनं श्रुत्वा लक्ष्मणस्य महात्मनः । उवाच रामं कौसल्या रुदती शोकलालसा ॥२०॥
भ्रातुस्ते वदतः पुत्र लक्ष्मणस्य श्रुतं त्वया । यदत्रानन्तरं तत्त्वं कुरुष्व यदि रोचते ॥२१॥
न चाधर्म्यं वचः श्रुत्वा सपत्न्या मम भाषितम् । विहाय शोकसंतप्तां गन्तुमर्हसि मामितः ॥२२॥
धर्मज्ञ इति धर्मिष्ठ धर्मं चरितुमिच्छसि । शुश्रूष मामिहस्थस्त्वं चर धर्ममनुत्तमम् ॥२३॥
शुश्रूषुर्जननीं पुत्र स्वगृहे नियतो वसन् । परेण तपसा युक्तः काश्यपस्त्रिदिवं गतः ॥२४॥
यथैव राजा पूज्यस्ते गौरवेण तथा ह्यहम् । त्वां साहं नानुजानामि न गन्तव्यमितो वनम् ॥२५॥
त्वद्वियोगान्न मे कार्यं जीवितेन सुखेन च । त्वया सह मम श्रेयस्तृणानामपि भक्षणम् ॥२६॥
यदि त्वं यास्यसि वनं त्यक्त्वा मां शोकलालसाम् । अहं प्रायमिहासिष्ये न च शक्ष्यामि जीवितुम् ॥२७॥
ततस्त्वं प्राप्स्यसे पुत्र निरयं लोकविश्रुतम् । ब्रह्महत्यामिवाधर्मात् समुद्रः सरितां पतिः ॥२८॥

On hearing the aforesaid utterance of the high-minded Lakṣmaṇa, Kausalyā, who was plunged in grief, spoke weeping (as follows) to Śrī Rama:—(20) "The statement of your (younger) brother, my son, has been heard by you (even) as he spoke. Do you (now), if it (so) pleases you, what should be done next in this connection. (21) Hearing the unjust command given by my co-wife you ought not in any case to depart from Ayodhya leaving me sore stricken with grief. (22) If, as one who is well-versed in morality, you wish to do what is right O most pious son, serve you me remaining here and practise (thus) the highest virtue. (23) Staying self-disciplined at home in the service of his mother and endowed with supreme asceticism, a son of Kaśyapa attained (the position of a Prajāpati, lord of creation, in) heaven. (24) As the king is worthy of adoration to you, more so am I from the point of view of merit. As such I do not grant leave to you (to depart). (Hence) you should not proceed to the forest from this place. (25) After (my) separation from you I have no longer any use for life and happiness. In your company it is better for me (even) to live on blades of grass. (26) If you retire to the forest leaving me plunged in grief, I shall take up a vow of fasting unto death; for (in that case) I shall no longer be able to survive. (27) As a sequel to that (offence of yours), my son, you will suffer hellish tortures well-known in the world, (even) as Ocean, the spouse of (deities presiding over) the rivers, underwent hellish tortures of the kind suffered as a result of Brahmanicide through unrighteousness (in the form of inflicting suffering on his own mother). (28)

विलपन्तीं तथा दीनां कौसल्यां जननीं ततः । उवाच रामो धर्मात्मा वचनं धर्मसंहितम् ॥२९॥
नास्ति शक्तिः पितुर्वाक्यं समतिक्रमितुं मम । प्रसादये त्वां शिरसा गन्तुमिच्छाम्यहं वनम् ॥३०॥
ऋषिणा च पितुर्वाक्यं कुर्वता वनचारिणा । गौर्हता जानताधर्मं कण्डुना च विपश्चिता ॥३१॥
अस्माकं तु कुले पूर्वं सगरस्याज्ञया पितुः । खनद्भिः सागरैर्भूमिमवाप्तः सुमहान् वधः ॥३२॥
जामदग्न्येन रामेण रेणुका जननी स्वयम् । कृत्ता परशुनारण्ये पितुर्वचनकारणात् ॥३३॥
एतैरन्यैश्च बहुभिर्देवि देवसमैः कृतम् । पितुर्वचनमक्लीबं करिष्यामि पितुर्हितम् ॥३४॥
न खल्वेतन्मयैकेन क्रियते पितृशासनम् । एतैरपि कृतं देवि ये मया परिकीर्तिताः ॥३५॥
नाहं धर्ममपूर्वं ते प्रतिकूलं प्रवर्तये । पूर्वैरयमभिप्रेतो गतो मार्गोऽनुगम्यते ॥३६॥
तदेतत् तु मया कार्यं क्रियते भुवि नान्यथा । पितुर्हि वचनं कुर्वन् न कश्चिन्नाम हीयते ॥३७॥

Śrī Rāma, whose mind was given to piety, thereupon made the following submission, conformable to righteousness, to his afflicted mother, Kausalyā, who was wailing as aforesaid:— (29) "I have no courage to flout the command of my father and (as such) wish to proceed to the forest. I (therefore) solicit your favour (in the form of leave to depart) with my head bent low. (30) A cow was slaughtered (in the past) by the learned Sage Kaṇḍu living in a forest, in obedience to the command of his father, even though he knew it to be a sin. (31) A tragic death was met in the past by the sons of Sagara (numbering sixty thousand), belonging to our race, while digging the earth under the command of their father. (32) Mother Reṇukā was beheaded in a forest by Paraśurāma, son of Sage Jamadagni, by means of an axe with his own hand in obedience to the command of his father. (33) Their father's behest has been unhesitatingly carried out by these as well as by many other godlike men, I (too) shall (therefore) do a good turn to my father, O godly mother ! (34) Indeed a father's command is not being carried out by me alone in this case, (but) it has been done by those as well that have been mentioned by me above, O pious lady ! (35) I am not introducing any new sacred practice disagreeable to you. That path (alone) is being followed by me, which was intended and has been traversed by my forbears. (36) That (alone) which is worth doing on this globe is being done by me in this case, not otherwise. Indeed, as is well known, nobody doing the bidding of his father is forsaken by virtue." (37)

तामेवमुक्त्वा जननीं लक्ष्मणं पुनरब्रवीत् । वाक्यं वाक्यविदां श्रेष्ठः श्रेष्ठः सर्वधनुष्मताम् ॥३८॥
तव लक्ष्मण जानामि मयि स्नेहमनुत्तमम् । विक्रमं चैव सत्त्वं च तेजश्च सुदुरासदम् ॥३९॥
मम मातुर्महद् दुःखमतुलं शुभलक्षण । अभिप्रायं न विज्ञाय सत्यस्य च शमस्य च ॥४०॥
धर्मो हि परमो लोके धर्मे सत्यं प्रतिष्ठितम् । धर्मसंश्रितमप्येतत् पितुर्वचनमुत्तमम् ॥४१॥
संश्रुत्य च पितुर्वाक्यं मातुर्वा ब्राह्मणस्य वा । न कर्तव्यं वृथा वीर धर्ममाश्रित्य तिष्ठता ॥४२॥

सोऽहं न शक्ष्यामि पुनर्नियोगमतिवर्तितुम् । पितुर्हि वचनाद् वीर कैकेय्याहं प्रचोदितः ॥४३॥
तदेतां विसृजानार्यां क्षत्रधर्माश्रितां मतिम् । धर्ममाश्रय मा तैक्ष्ण्यं मद्बुद्धिरनुगम्यताम् ॥४४॥

Having submitted to his celebrated mother as aforesaid, Śrī Rāma, the foremost of those knowing the art of expression as also of all bowmen, then spoke to Lakṣmaṇa as follows :— (38) "I know your unsurpassed love for me as also your valour and strength as well as your glory, which cannot be easily approached (by others). (39) Not knowing the import of truthfulness and self-control as understood by me great agony, which is unequalled (anywhere) is being experienced by my mother, O prince endowed with noble characteristics ! (40) Indeed righteousness is paramount in the world (and) truthfulness is rooted in piety. This command of my father too is supreme in that it is based on righteousness. (41) Having plighted one's word to do the bidding of one's father, mother or a Brahman, O gallant Lakṣmaṇa, he who takes his stand on righteousness should not falsify it. (42) Since I have been commanded by Kaikeyī (to go into exile) according to the pledge given (to her) by my father, O valiant prince, I, constituted as I am, dare not flout her command in any case. (43) Therefore give up this unworthy thought (of assuming the reins of government even by taking captive or killing the reigning king), deriving its support from military heroism Take your stand on righteousness and do not resort to severity. Let my resolution (of carrying out the royal command), be followed." (44)

तमेवमुक्त्वा सौहार्दाद् भ्रातरं लक्ष्मणाग्रजः । उवाच भूयः कौसल्यां प्राञ्जलिः शिरसा नतः ॥४५॥
अनुमन्यस्व मां देवि गमिष्यन्तमितो वनम् । शापितासि मम प्राणैः कुरु स्वस्त्ययनानि मे ॥४६॥
तीर्णप्रतिज्ञश्च वनात् पुनरेष्याम्यहं पुरीम् । ययातिरिव राजर्षिः पुरा हित्वा पुनर्दिवम् ॥४७॥
शोकः संधार्यतां मातर्हृदये साधु मा शुचः । वनवासादिहैष्यामि पुनः कृत्वा पितुर्वचः ॥४८॥
त्वया मया च वैदेह्या लक्ष्मणेन सुमित्रया । पितुर्नियोगे स्थातव्यमेष धर्मः सनातनः ॥४९॥
अवसम्भृत्य सम्भारान् दुःखं हृदि निगृह्य च । वनवासकृता बुद्धिर्मम धर्म्यानुवर्त्यताम् ॥५०॥

Having thus admonished his aforesaid younger brother (Lakṣmaṇa) out of affection, Śrī Rāma (Lakṣmaṇa's eldest brother) submitted once more to (his mother) Kausalyā with joined palms and his head beat low (as follows) :—(45) "Grant leave, O glorious lady, to me, ready (as I am) to depart from Ayodhya to the forest. You are (hereby) bound with an oath on my life : (please) perform rites ensuring my welfare (in the journey). (46) Having honoured my vow (of remaining in exile for fourteen years) I shall come back from the forest to Ayodhya (even) as in the former days the royal sage Yayāti ascended back to heaven after leaving it (once). (47) Let grief be fully inhibited in the heart, O mother ! (Pray) do not sorrow. Having carried out the behest of my father I shall return to Ayodhya from my exile in the forest. (48) Yourself, Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory), Lakṣmaṇa, Sumitrā and myself should abide by the injunctions of my father : such is the eternal law of morality. (49) Removing the materials collected (for the installation) and restraining the agony in the heart, let my righteous resolution of taking up my abode in the forest be carried out." (50)

एतद् वचस्तस्य निशम्य माता सुधर्म्यमव्यग्रमविक्लवं च ।
मृतेव संज्ञां प्रतिलभ्य देवी समीक्ष्य रामं पुनरित्युवाच ॥५१॥
यथैव ते पुत्र पिता तथाहं गुरुः स्वधर्मेण सुहृत्तया च ।
न त्वानुजानामि न मां विहाय सुदुःखितामर्हसि पुत्र गन्तुम् ॥५२॥
किं जीवितेनेह विना त्वया मे लोकेन वा किं स्वधयामृतेन ।
श्रेयो मुहूर्तं तव संनिधानं ममैव कृत्स्नादपि जीवलोकात् ॥५३॥
नरैरिवोल्काभिरपोह्यमानो महागजो ध्वान्तमभिप्रविष्टः ।
भूयः प्रजज्वाल विलापमेवं निशम्य रामः करुणं जनन्याः ॥५४॥
स मातरं चैव विसंज्ञकल्पामार्तं च सौमित्रिमभिप्रतप्तम् ।
धर्मे स्थितो धर्म्यमुवाच वाक्यं यथा स एवार्हति तत्र वक्तुम् ॥५५॥

Hearing the aforesaid submission of Śrī Rāma, which was fully conformable to the principles of righteousness and was marked with patience and courage, the royal mother regained her consciousness like a dead woman coming to life again and, looking intently on Śrī Rāma, spoke (to him) once more as follows :—(51) "By virtue of my having discharged my duty (of tending you) as well as by virtue of my affection (towards you) I am worthy of your adoration in the same way, my son, as your father and I do not grant leave to you (to retire to the woods). (Therefore) leaving me sore distressed, my son, you ought not to go. (52) What is to be gained by me through life without you in this world or what joy shall I derive through the (other) world or through offering received by the departed in the realm of the manes or (even) through ambrosia—the food of the gods in heaven (if I am transferred to these realms after death)? Preferable to me is your presence even for an hour or so than (the company or even the governance of) the entire living creation !" (53) Hearing as aforesaid the piteous wail of his mother, Śrī Rāma grew all the more impetuous (impatient to escape) even as a lordly elephant that has entered a gloomy retreat would when goaded by men (laying the trap to catch it) with firebrands. (54) Holding (firmly) to his duty, Śrī Rāma made the following righteous reply, a reply which he alone was capable of making on that occasion, to his mother, who lay almost unconscious, as well as to Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), who was feeling distressed and greatly excited on that occasion :—(55)

अहं हि ते लक्ष्मण नित्यमेव जानामि भक्तिं च पराक्रमं च ।
मम त्वभिप्रायमसंनिरीक्ष्य मात्रा सहाभ्यर्दसि मा सुदुःखम् ॥५६॥
धर्मार्थकामाः खलु जीवलोके समीक्षिता धर्मफलोदयेषु ।
ये तत्र सर्वे स्युरसंशयं मे भार्येव वश्याभिमता सपुत्रा ॥५७॥
यस्मिंस्तु सर्वे स्युरसंनिविष्टा धर्मो यतः स्यात् तदुपक्रमेत ।
द्वेष्यो भवत्यर्थपरो हि लोके कामात्मता खल्वपि न प्रशस्ता ॥५८॥
गुरुश्च राजा च पिता च वृद्धः क्रोधात् प्रहर्षादथवापि कामात् ।
यद् व्यादिशेत् कार्यमवेक्ष्य धर्मं कस्तं न कुर्यादनृशंसवृत्तिः ॥५९॥

"Indeed, O Lakṣmaṇa, I know your everlasting devotion (to me) as well as your prowess. But, failing to read my mind fully, you harass me most painfully along with mother. (56) Religious merit, material gain and worldly enjoyment—which have been positively concluded to be the means of attaining happiness (the reward of merit) in the world of mortals—all undoubtedly follow in the wake of righteousness to my mind, (even) as one's wife, if obedient, is conducive to religious merit (by being helpful in the discharge of one's religious obligations such as hospitality to unexpected guests), yields sensuous enjoyment if agreeable and makes for prosperity (in the other world) by giving birth to a son. (57) One should abstain from pursuits in which all the (three) objects of human pursuit do not find any scope and should undertake that pursuit (alone) from which follows religious merit; for he who is devoted to material wealth (divorced from righteousness) becomes hateful; while excessive addiction to sensuous enjoyment (incompatible with righteousness) is not commendable either. (58) What man who is not cruel in his dealings would fail to perform as a sacred obligation a duty which his aged father, who is also his preceptor and king, might enjoin him to do, whether from anger, excessive delight or even from concupiscence? (59)

न तेन शक्नोमि पितुः प्रतिज्ञामिमां न कर्तुं सकलां यथावत् ।
स ह्यावयोस्तात गुरुर्नियोगे देव्याश्च भर्ता स गतिश्च धर्मः ॥६०॥
तस्मिन् पुनर्जीवति धर्मराजे विशेषतः स्वे पथि वर्तमाने ।
देवी मया सार्धमितोऽभिगच्छेत् कथंस्विदन्या विधवेव नारी ॥६१॥
सा मानुमन्यस्व वनं व्रजन्तं कुरुष्व नः स्वस्त्ययनानि देवि ।
यथा समाप्ते पुनराव्रजेयं यथा हि सत्येन पुनर्ययातिः ॥६२॥
यशो ह्यहं केवलराज्यकारणान्न पृष्ठतः कर्तुमलं महोदयम् ।
अदीर्घकाले न तु देवि जीविते वृणेऽवरामद्य महीमधर्मतः ॥६३॥

"Therefore, I cannot but duly implement this pledge of my father inasmuch as he is competent to command us both (Bharata as well as myself), O dear brother, and he is the asylum as also the means of happiness in this as well as in the other world of the queen (Kausalyā), whose husband he is (and with whom she should live through thick and thin rather than with her son). (60) So long as such a husband, who is not only a virtuous king but is staunchly adhering to his path (the path of virtue in the shape of truthfulness, for the sake of which he is abandoning his dearest son and sacrificing his interests), is alive, how can the empress, like an ordinary woman, who has lost her husband, actually depart from Ayodhya along with me ? (61) As such (pray) grant leave to me, proceeding to the forest, and perform sacred rites ensuring our welfare (in the journey), O godly lady, so that on the period of exile being complete I may come back even as King Yayāti ascended for the second time to heaven by dint of truthfulness. (62) For, I am unable to throw away fame, which is of greater consequence, for the sake of mere sovereignty (divorced from righteousness). Life being of (such a) short duration, O godly lady, I am not going to accept in any case the trivial rulership of the globe through unrighteousness today." (63)

प्रसादयन् नरवृषभः स मातरं पराक्रमाजिगमिषुरेव दण्डकान् ।
अथानुजं भृशमनुशास्य दर्शनं चकार तां हृदि जननीं प्रदक्षिणम् ॥६४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकविंशः सर्गः ॥ २१ ॥

(Thus) trying to please his mother and having fully taught Lakṣmaṇa (his younger brother) his own philosophy (of morality), that jewel among men, positively inclined as he was to proceed to the Daṇḍaka fores by way of an enterprise, mentall went round his aforesaid mother clockwise (as a mark of respect). (64)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-one in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्वाविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXII

Śrī Rāma pacifies Lakṣmaṇa, who was angry with Kaikeyī, by denying the instrumentality of Kaikeyī in his banishment and laying the entire blame on his own fate.

अथ तं व्यथया दीनं सविशेषममर्षितम् । सरोषमिव नागेन्द्रं रोषविस्फारितेक्षणम् ॥ १ ॥
आसाद्य रामः सौमित्रिं सुहृदं भ्रातरं प्रियम् । उवाचेदं स धैर्येण धारयन् सत्त्वमात्मवान् ॥ २ ॥
निगृह्य रोषं शोकं च धैर्यमाश्रित्य केवलम् । अवमानं निरस्यैनं गृहीत्वा हर्षमुत्तमम् ॥ ३ ॥
उपक्लृप्तं यदैतन्मे अभिषेकार्थमुत्तमम् । सर्वं निवर्तय क्षिप्रं कुरु कार्यं निरव्ययम् ॥ ४ ॥
सौमित्रे योऽभिषेकार्थे मम सम्भारसम्भ्रमः । अभिषेकनिवृत्त्यर्थे सोऽस्तु सम्भारसम्भ्रमः ॥ ५ ॥
यस्या मदभिषेकार्थे मानसं परितप्यते । माता नः सा यथा न स्यात् सविशङ्का तथा कुरु ॥ ६ ॥
तस्याः शङ्कामयं दुःखं मुहूर्तमपि नोत्सहे । मनसि प्रतिसंजातं सौमित्रेऽहमुपेक्षितुम् ॥ ७ ॥

Approaching the celebrated Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), his beloved brother and well-wisher, who felt distressed through agony and was greatly indignant and was looking with eyes wide open through rage like an infuriated elephant, the said Śrī Rāma, who had mastered his self, spoke (to him) as follows, restraining his mind with firmness:—(1-2) "Curbing your anger (against our father and Kaikeyī) and grief (over my impending exile) and embracing uncommon fortitude, (nay) ignoring this affront (in the form of banishing me) and deriving the highest joy (from the idea of having helped our father in implementing his plighted word and thereby ensuring his place in the highest heaven), (pray) cause to be sent back all the exquisite material that has been got ready for my consecration (as Prince Regent) and quickly and uninterruptedly accomplish what requires to be done (now in the shape of preparations for the journey). (3-4) Let the same zeal be evinced in preparing for the exile (which implies the cessation of the consecration) as was shown in collecting materials for my installation, O darling of Sumitrā! (5) Take steps to ensure that that mother of ours (*viz*, Kaikeyī) whose mind is greatly troubled over the question of my installation is not filled with apprehension (that I may assume a revolting attitude and refuse to leave the capital). (6) I cannot afford to ignore even for a while. O darling of Sumitrā, the agony in the form of apprehension aroused in her mind. (7)

न बुद्धिपूर्वं नाबुद्धं स्मरामीह कदाचन । मातॄणां वा पितुर्वाहं कृतमल्पं च विप्रियम् ॥८॥
सत्यः सत्याभिसंधश्च नित्यं सत्यपराक्रमः । परलोकभयाद् भीतो निर्भयोऽस्तु पिता मम ॥९॥
तस्यापि हि भवेदस्मिन् कर्मण्यप्रतिसंहृते । सत्यं नेति मनस्तापस्तस्य तापस्तपेच्च माम् ॥१०॥
अभिषेकविधानं तु तस्मात् संहृत्य लक्ष्मण । अन्वगेवाहमिच्छामि वनं गन्तुमितः पुरः ॥११॥
मम प्रव्राजनादद्य कृतकृत्या नृपात्मजा । सुतं भरतमव्यग्रमभिषेचयतां ततः ॥१२॥
मयि चीराजिनधरे जटामण्डलधारिणि । गतेऽरण्यं च कैकेय्या भविष्यति मनस्सुखम् ॥१३॥
बुद्धिः प्रणीता येनेयं मनश्च सुसमाहितम् । तं नु नार्हामि संक्लेष्टुं प्रव्रजिष्यामि मा चिरम् ॥१४॥

"I do not remember the least offence ever given (by me) consciously or unwittingly to my mothers or to my father in this life. (8) Let my father—who is ever truthful, true to his promise, truly valiant and afraid of falsehood (which brings disaster in the other world),—be rid of fear (in the other world by my redeeming the promise made by him to Kaikeyī). (9) Indeed, so long as this business (-of installation) is not liquidated the painful consciousness that his veracity has not been vindicated will lurk in his (father's) mind too and his agony is sure to distress me as well. (10) Therefore, having done away with this ceremony of installation, O Lakṣmaṇa, I for my part wish to proceed from this city to the forest soon. (11) Accomplished of purpose as a result of my banishment, let Kaikeyī (the daughter of King Aśwapati) then install her son, Bharata, this (very) day, without any distraction of mind. (12) On my having proceeded to the forest, clad in the bark of trees and deerskin and wearing a coil of matted locks, the mind of Kaikeyī will be gratified. (13) Surely I ought not to give offence to Providence (by crossing His purpose), as it is by him that this idea (of sending me away into exile to the forest) has been infused (into the mind of Kaikeyī through the machination of Mantharā) and her mind fully set at rest (on the question). I shall (accordingly) go into exile, let there be no delay. (14)

कृतान्त एव सौमित्रे द्रष्टव्यो मत्प्रवासने । राज्यस्य च वितीर्णस्य पुनरेव निवर्तने ॥१५॥
कैकेय्याः प्रतिपत्तिर्हि कथं स्यान्मम वेदने । यदि तस्या न भावोऽयं कृतान्तविहितो भवेत् ॥१६॥
जानासि हि यथा सौम्य न मातृषु ममान्तरम् । भूतपूर्वं विशेषो वा तस्या मयि सुतेऽपि वा ॥१७॥
सोऽभिषेकनिवृत्त्यर्थैः प्रवासार्थैश्च दुर्वचैः । उग्रैर्वाक्यैरहं तस्या नान्यद् दैवात् समर्थये ॥१८॥
कथं प्रकृतिसम्पन्ना राजपुत्री तथागुणा । ब्रूयात् सा प्राकृतेव स्त्री मत्पीड्यं भर्तृसंनिधौ ॥१९॥
यदचिन्त्यं तु तद् दैवं भूतेष्वपि न हन्यते । व्यक्तं मयि च तस्यां च पतितो हि विपर्ययः ॥२०॥
कश्च दैवेन सौमित्रे योद्धुमुत्सहते पुमान् । यस्य नु ग्रहणं किंचित् कर्मणोऽन्यत्र दृश्यते ॥२१॥
सुखदुःखे भयक्रोधौ लाभालाभौ भवाभवौ । यस्य किंचित् तथाभूतं ननु दैवस्य कर्म तत् ॥२२॥
ऋषयोऽप्युग्रतपसो दैवेनाभिप्रचोदिताः । उत्सृज्य नियमांस्तीव्रान् भ्रश्यन्ते काममन्युभिः ॥२३॥
असंकल्पितमेवेह यदकस्मात् प्रवर्तते । निवर्त्यारब्धमारम्भैर्ननु दैवस्य कर्म तत् ॥२४॥

"Providence alone should be regarded, O son of Sumitrā, as responsible for sending me into exile as well as for taking back (from me) the sovereignty (of Ayodhya) offered to me. (15) How could the resolution of persecuting me

(by way of sending me into exile) enter the mind of Kaikeyī (my own mother) if this idea of hers were not prompted by Providence ? (16) For, you (already) know, O gentle brother, that no discrimination was (ever) made by me between my mothers in the past nor was any distinction made even by her between her son and myself. (17) As such I connot held anything other than the will of Providence responsible for her galling the king with pungent words, hard to utter (even for othere), urging him to stop my installation and sending me into exile. (18) How (else) could she, a princess of gentle disposition and possessing such (rare) qualities (of head and heart) utter like a vulgar woman in the presence of her husband words intended to torment me ? (19) That which cannot be foreseen is surely a decree of Providence and it cannot be set aside by any among created beings. Evidently, therefore, it is by the will of Providence that the unexpected has befallen me as well as her. (20) Again, what man can dare contend, O son of Sumitrā, with destiny, of which no indication can be found other than the consequence of an act ? (21) Joy and sorrow, fear and anger, gain and loss, birth and death and whatever similar experience comes to a particular individual, that is unquestionably the work of Providence. (22) Strongly impelled by destiny, even sages practising severe austerities are led astray by concupiscence and anger etc., abandoning their strict observance. (23) Setting aside an undertaking (already) commenced with the help of requisite materials, that which takes place unexpectedly without any (ostensible) cause is undoubtedly the doing of Providence. (24)

एतया तत्त्वया बुद्ध्या संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना । व्याहतेऽप्यभिषेके मे परितापो न विद्यते ॥२५॥
तस्मादपरितापः संस्त्वमप्यनुविधाय माम् । प्रतिसंहारय क्षिप्रमाभिषेचनिकीं क्रियाम् ॥२६॥
एभिरेव घटैः सर्वैरभिषेचनसम्भृतैः । मम लक्ष्मण तापस्ये व्रतस्नानं भविष्यति ॥२७॥
अथवा किं मयैतेन राज्यद्रव्यमयेन तु । उद्धृतं मे स्वयं तोयं व्रतादेशं करिष्यति ॥२८॥
मा च लक्ष्मण संतापं कार्षीर्लक्ष्म्या विपर्यये । राज्यं वा वनवासो वा वनवासो महोदयः ॥२९॥
न लक्ष्मणास्मिन् मम राज्यविघ्ने माता यवीयस्यभिशङ्कितव्या ।
दैवाभिपन्ना न पिता कथंचिज्जानासि दैवं हि तथाप्रभावम् ॥३०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्वाविंशः सर्गः ॥ २२ ॥

In spite of my installation having been interrupted no agony is experienced by me, who have fully steadied my mind of myself by recourse to this true wisdom. (25) Therefore, rid of agony and following my line of thought, cause you the proceedings of installation to be stopped at once. (26) With all these jars (containing sacred waters) brought together for my consecration, O Lakṣmaṇa, will be accomplished my bath at the inauguration of my vow of asceticism. (27) Or what have I to do in reality with this water accompanied in abundance by (auspicious) articles collected for the installation ? Water drawn by me personally will serve to inaugurate my vow of asceticism. (28) Moreover, O Lakṣmaṇa, do not give way to remorse over the loss of fortune. To me it matters little whether sovereignty falls to my lot or exile the latter being of greater consequence (in that it will be free from worries and favourable for asceticism and will afford me an opportunity to redeem father's pledge given to Kaikeyī) (29) Our youngest mother (Kaikeyī) ought not on any account be suspected of having brought about this interruption in my installation nor our father, both of whom are subject to the control of Providence; for you know Providence to be possessed of unfailing power". (30)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-two in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रयोविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXIII

Enraged to hear the exhortation of Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa urges in reply that the word of their father was worth ignoring inasmuch as it was divorced from righteousness and, further emphasizing the predominance of personal effort over destiny, persuades Śrī Rāma to take up arms against those who interfere with his installation and occupy the throne of Ayodhya by force. Śrī Rāma, however, pacifies Lakṣmaṇa and impresses on him the imperative necessity of their carrying out the command of their father.

इति ब्रुवति रामे तु लक्ष्मणोऽवाक्शिरा इव । ध्यात्वा मध्यं जगामाशु सहसा दैन्यहर्षयोः ॥ १ ॥
तदा तु बद्ध्वा भ्रुकुटीं भ्रुवोर्मध्ये नरर्षभः । निशश्वास महासर्पो बिलस्थ इव रोषितः ॥ २ ॥
तस्य दुष्प्रतिवीक्ष्यं तद् भ्रुकुटीसहितं तदा । बभौ क्रुद्धस्य सिंहस्य मुखस्य सदृशं मुखम् ॥ ३ ॥
अग्रहस्तं विधुन्वंस्तु हस्ती हस्तमिवात्मनः । तिर्यगूर्ध्वं शरीरे च पातयित्वा शिरोधराम् ॥ ४ ॥
अग्राक्ष्णा वीक्षमाणस्तु तिर्यग् भ्रातरमब्रवीत् । अस्थाने सम्भ्रमो यस्य जातो वै सुमहानयम् ॥ ५ ॥
धर्मदोषप्रसङ्गेन लोकस्यानतिशङ्कया । कथं ह्येतदसम्भ्रान्तस्त्वद्विधो वक्तुमर्हति ॥ ६ ॥
यथा ह्येवमशौण्डीरं शौण्डीरः क्षत्रियर्षभः । किं नाम कृपणं दैवमशक्तमभिशंससि ॥ ७ ॥

Pondering with his head bent low as it were while Śrī Rāma spoke as aforesaid, Lakṣmaṇa for his part quickly and suddenly began to swing between dejection (at the interruption of Śrī Rāma's installation) and delight (over the latter's steadfast devotion to righteousness). (1) Nay, knitting his brows at the space between his eyebrows, at that time, Lakṣmaṇa (a jewel among men) hissed like an enraged cobra in a hole. (2) That frowning aspect of his, which was difficult to gaze on, appeared at that moment like the face of an infuriated lion. (3) Violently shaking his forearm precisely as an elephant would shake its proboscis, and flinging his neck horizontally as well as upwards on his body, and gazing obliquely with a corner of his eye, Lakṣmaṇa for his part spoke (as follows) to his brother (Śrī Rāma) :—"At an inopportune moment indeed has this inordinate flurry appeared in you for fear of lapsing from the path of duty and with a view to disarming the grave suspicion in the mind of the people (that a prince who is disloyal to his father could not be expected to rule his subjects righteously). Indeed, how can a man like yourself speak as you are doing, unless he is agitated? I wonder how you regularly glorify in this way fate,—which is indeed ineffectual, pitiable and impotent,—powerful and foremost among the Kṣatriyas as you are? (4-7)

पापयोस्ते कथं नाम तयोः शङ्का न विद्यते । सन्ति धर्मोपधासक्ता धर्मात्मन् किं न बुध्यसे ॥ ८ ॥
तयोः सुचरितं स्वार्थे शाठ्यात् परिजिहीर्षतोः ।
यदि नैवं व्यवसितं स्याद्धि प्रागेव राघव । तयोः प्रागेव दत्तश्च स्याद् वरः प्रकृतश्च सः ॥ ९ ॥
लोकविद्विष्टमारब्धं त्वदन्यस्याभिषेचनम् । नोत्सहे सहितुं वीर तत्र मे क्षन्तुमर्हसि ॥१०॥
येनैवमागता द्वैधं तव बुद्धिर्महामते । सोऽपि धर्मो मम द्वेष्यो यत्प्रसङ्गाद् विमुह्यसि ॥११॥
कथं त्वं कर्मणा शक्तः कैकेयीवशवर्तिनः । करिष्यसि पितुर्वाक्यमधर्मिष्ठं विगर्हितम् ॥१२॥
यद्ययं किल्बिषाद् भेदः कृतोऽप्येवं न गृह्यते । जायते तत्र मे दुःखं धर्मसङ्गश्च गर्हितः ॥१३॥

"It is a matter of surprise how there is no suspicion in your mind about that wicked couple (Daśaratha and Kaikeyī). Don't you know, O pious Rāma, that there are men devoted to semblance of piety?" (8) Had this not actually been at the very outset the intention, O scion of Raghu, of the couple, who seek through fraud for their own selfish end, to forsake you, who have such a noble conduct, the installation would not have been undertaken at all. Nay, if (the story of) the boon granted by the one and received by the other had been real, it would have been granted even before (the preparations for the installation were taken in hand). (9) What has (now) been commenced is disliked by the people. I cannot brook, O heroic Rāma, the installation of any one other than you. Be pleased to forgive my intolerance in this matter. (10) Repellent to me is that piety too by (the thought of) which your mind (which was once inclined to accept the office of Prince Regent) has thus been diverted from the purpose, O noble-minded brother, and through devotion to which you are falling a prey to infatuation. (11) (Had it not been so) how are you going to redeem the most unrighteous and reproachful pledge of your father who is under the thumb of Kaikeyī, even though you are able to set things right by recourse to action? (12) Since this interruption (in your installation), though brought about through machination (in the shape of connecting the story of a boon granted by the emperor), is not being recognized (by you) as such, agony is caused to me on that account and partiality to (such false) piety is reprehensible (in my eyes). (13)

तवायं धर्मसंयोगो लोकस्यास्य विगर्हितः ।
मनसापि कथं कामं कुर्यात् त्वां कामवृत्तयोः । तयोस्त्वहितयोर्नित्यं शत्र्वोः पित्रभिधानयोः ॥१४॥
यद्यपि प्रतिपत्तिस्ते दैवी चापि तयोर्मतम् । तथाप्युपेक्षणीयं ते न मे तदपि रोचते ॥१५॥
विक्लवो वीर्यहीनो यः स दैवमनुवर्तते । वीराः सम्भावितात्मानो न दैवं पर्युपासते ॥१६॥
दैवं पुरुषकारेण यः समर्थः प्रबाधितुम् । न दैवेन विपन्नार्थः पुरुषः सोऽवसीदति ॥१७॥
द्रक्ष्यन्ति त्वद्य दैवस्य पौरुषं पुरुषस्य च । दैवमानुषयोरद्य व्यक्ता व्यक्तिर्भविष्यति ॥१८॥
अद्य मे पौरुषहतं दैवं द्रक्ष्यन्ति वै जनाः । यैर्दैवादाहतं तेऽद्य दृष्टं राज्याभिषेचनम् ॥१९॥
अत्यङ्कुशमिवोद्दामं गजं मदजलोद्धतम् । प्रधावितमहं दैवं पौरुषेण निवर्तये ॥२०॥
लोकपालाः समस्तास्ते नाद्य रामाभिषेचनम् । न च कृत्स्नास्त्रयो लोका विहन्युः किं पुनः पिता ॥२१॥
यैर्विवासस्तवारण्ये मिथो राजन् समर्थितः । अरण्ये ते विवत्स्यन्ति चतुर्दश समास्तथा ॥२२॥
अहं तदाशां धक्ष्यामि पितुस्तस्याश्च या तव । अभिषेकविघातेन पुत्रराज्याय वर्तते ॥२३॥

"This adherence of yours to piety is condemned in the eyes of these people (of Ayodhya). How can anyone other than you fulfil, even in thought, the desire of the aforesaid two enemies, bearing the name of parents, who follow their own pleasure and are ever hostile to you? (14) Although it is your belief that (even) the decision of your parents (to stop your installation) is inspired by fate, it nonetheless deserves to be ignored by yourself. Such a decree even of fate does not please me. (15) He (alone) who is cowardly and powerless trusts in fate. The valiant, who are possessed of a strong mind, never seek shelter in fate. (16) A man who is capable of setting aside the decree of fate through personal effort never feels disheartened on his purpose being thwarted by destiny. (17) People will see today the relative strength of fate and a human being. The distinction between fate and a human being will be manifest today. (18) People by whom your installation on the throne (of Ayodhya) has been seen interrupted through destiny today will find fate worsted this very day by my valour. (19) By (sheer) dint of bravery I shall repulse desting rushing headlong like an uncontrollable and unrestrained elephant haughty with fluid exuding from its temples (20) Neither all the guardians of the spheres nor (the denizens of) all the three worlds, O Rāma, can interrupt your consecration today; how, then, can father do it? (21) They (alone) by whom, O king, has your exile to the forest been unanimously supported will likewise live in exile for fourteen years. (22) I shall bring to naught that hope of father as well as of hers (Kaikeyī) which is directed towards securing sovereignty for her son through interruption of your cansecration. (23)

मद्बलेन विरुद्धाय न स्याद् दैवबलं तथा । प्रभविष्यति दुःखाय यथोग्रं पौरुषं मम ॥२४॥
ऊर्ध्वं वर्षसहस्रान्ते प्रजापाल्यमनन्तरम् । आर्यपुत्राः करिष्यन्ति वनवास गते त्वयि ॥२५॥
पूर्वराजर्षिवृत्त्या हि वनवासोऽभिधीयते । प्रजा निक्षिप्य पुत्रेषु पुत्रवत् परिपालने ॥२६॥
स चेद् राजन्यनेकाग्रे राज्यविभ्रमशङ्कया । नैवमिच्छसि धर्मात्मन् राज्यं राम त्वमात्मनि ॥२७॥
प्रतिजाने च ते वीर मा भूवं वीरलोकभाक् । राज्यं च तव रक्षेयमहं वेलेव सागरम् ॥२८॥
मङ्गलैरभिषिञ्चस्व तत्र त्वं व्यापृतो भव । अहमेको महीपालानलं वारयितुं बलात् ॥२९॥
न शोभार्थाविमौ बाहू न धनुर्भूषणाय मे । नासिराबन्धनार्थाय न शराः स्तम्भहेतवः ॥३०॥
अमित्रमथनार्थाय सर्वमेतच्चतुष्टयम् । न चाहं कामयेऽत्यर्थं यः स्याच्छत्रुर्मतो मम ॥३१॥
असिना तीक्ष्णधारेण विद्युच्चलितवर्चसा । प्रगृहीतेन वै शत्रुं वज्रिणं वा न कल्पये ॥३२॥

"For him who is antagonistic to my strength the power of destiny will not prove helpful to the same extent as my fierce might will redound to his suffering. (24) Later on when you have retired to take up your abode in the forest at the end of thousands of years, sons of your worthy self will rule over the people without interruption (leaving no room for others even then). (25) In conformity with the conduct of ancient royal sages residence in the forest is recommended (for kings only) when they have committed the people to the care of their sons for being protected as sons. (26) If, constituted as you are, O pious-minded Rāma, you do not really seek sovereignty for yourself for fear of disaffection in the state, the king being irresolute (in the matter of renouncing the kingship and retiring to the forest), you need not harbour any misgiving on that score. (27) Nay, I promise to you, O valiant brother, that I shall guard you as well as your kingdom (even) as the coastline guards the ocean (and keeps it within bounds). Let me not earn the realms that fall to the share of heroes (after death) if I fail to do so. (28) Allow yourself to be consecrated (by Vasiṣṭha and others) with auspicious articles and be up and doing in that direction. I am enough to repel (hostile) monarchs forcibly single-handed. (29) These arms (of mine) are not intended to add to my charm nor is this bow meant to serve as an ornament (for my body). Nor is my sword meant for being tied to my belt (and hanging by my side as a badge of honour) nor are my arrows meant to serve as a support (for some structure). (30) All these four exist (only) for crushing the enemy. Nor do I wish that I should not hew, with my uplifted keen-edged sword possessing an inconstant sheen like a flash of lightning, him who is considered to be my inveterate enemy, be he Indra (the wielder of the thunderbolt). (31-32)

खड्गनिष्पेषनिष्पिष्टैर्गहना दुश्चरा च मे । हस्त्यश्वरथिहस्तोरुशिरोभिर्भविता मही ॥३३॥
खड्गधाराहता मेऽद्य दीप्यमाना इवाग्नयः । पतिष्यन्ति द्विषो भूमौ मेघा इव सविद्युतः ॥३४॥
बद्धगोधाङ्गुलित्राणे प्रगृहीतशरासने । कथं पुरुषमानी स्यात् पुरुषाणां मयि स्थिते ॥३५॥
बहुभिश्चैकमत्यस्यन्नेकेन च बहूञ्जनान् । विनियोक्ष्याम्यहं बाणान्नृवाजिगजमर्मसु ॥३६॥
अद्य मेऽस्त्रप्रभावस्य प्रभावः प्रभविष्यति । राज्ञश्चाप्रभुतां कर्तुं प्रभुत्वं च तव प्रभो ॥३७॥
अद्य चन्दनसारस्य केयूरामोक्षणस्य च । वसूनां च विमोक्षस्य सुहृदां पालनस्य च ॥३८॥
अनुरूपाविमौ बाहू राम कर्म करिष्यतः । अभिषेचनविघ्नस्य कर्तॄणां ते निवारणे ॥३९॥
ब्रवीहि कोऽद्यैव मया वियुज्यतां तवासुहृत् प्राणयशःसुहृज्जनैः ।
यथा तवेयं वसुधा वशा भवेत् तथैव मां शाधि तवास्मि किंकरः ॥४०॥
विमृज्य बाष्पं परिसान्त्व्य चासकृत् स लक्ष्मणं राघववंशवर्धनः ।
उवाच पित्रोर्वचने व्यवस्थितं निबोध मामेष हि सौम्य सत्पथः ॥४१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्रयोविंशः सर्गः ॥ २३ ॥

"The earth will be thickly set (in no time) with the trunks (or hands) of elephants, horses and warriors fighting in cars, severed with the blows of my sword, and will become hard to tread. (33) Killed with the edge of my sword today (and consequently bathed in blood), enemies will drop on the ground like (so many) blazing fires or clouds accompanied with (flashes of) lightning. (34) While I stand (on the battle-field) with finger-protectors (made of the skin of iguana) fastened (glove-like round the left hand) to prevent injury from a bow-string and with uplifted bow, how can anyone among men remain proud of his valour (and dare stand before me)? (35) Throwing down a single warrior with many shafts and many men with a single arrow, I shall dig arrows into the vitals of men, horses and elephants. (36) Today the effectiveness of the mind of my weapons will manifest itself in order to prove the helplessness of the king (Daśaratha) and demonstrate your sovereignty, O lord! (37) These arms of mine, which are worthy of (being daubed with) sandal paste and putting on a pair of armlets, as well as of giving away riches and protecting friends and relations, O Rāma, will exert themselves today to stop those who are interrupting your consecration. (38-39) Speak out, which enemy of yours may be deprived this very day of his life, fame (of invincibility) and relations. (Pray) instruct me how to proceed so that the globe may be brought under your control. I am at your beck and call." (40) Wiping the tears of Lakṣmaṇa and comforting him more than once, Śrī Rāma, the promoter of Raghu's race, replied, "Know me, gentle brother, to be firmly obedient to the command of my parents; for such is the path trodden by the righteous." (41)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-three in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुर्विंशः सर्गः

Canto XXIV

Finding Śrī Rāma firm in his obedience to the command of his parents, Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother) urges him to take her along with him. On being told, however, that it was incumbent on a matron whose husband was alive to remain with the latter and serve him, she consents to Śrī Rāma's departure to the forest.

तं समीक्ष्य व्यवसितं पितुर्निर्देशपालने । कौसल्या बाष्पसंरुद्धा वचो धर्मिष्ठमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
अदृष्टदुःखो धर्मात्मा सर्वभूतप्रियंवदः । मयि जातो दशरथात् कथमुञ्छेन वर्तयेत् ॥ २ ॥
यस्य भृत्याश्च दासाश्च मृष्टान्यन्नानि भुञ्जते । कथं स भोक्ष्यते रामो वने मूलफलान्ययम् ॥ ३ ॥
क एतच्छ्रद्दधेच्छ्रुत्वा कस्य वा न भवेद् भयम् । गुणवान् दयितो राज्ञः काकुत्स्थो यद् विवास्यते ॥ ४ ॥
नूनं तु बलवाँल्लोके कृतान्तः सर्वमादिशन् । लोके रामाभिरामस्त्वं वनं यत्र गमिष्यसि ॥ ५ ॥
अयं तु मामात्मभवस्तवादर्शनमारुतः । विलापदुःखसमिधो रुदिताश्रुहुताहुतिः ॥ ६ ॥
चिन्ताबाष्पमहाधूमस्तवागमनचिन्तजः । कर्शयित्वाधिकं पुत्र निःश्वासायाससम्भवः ॥ ७ ॥
त्वया विहीनामिह मां शोकाग्निरतुलो महान् । प्रधक्ष्यति यथा कक्षं चित्रभानुर्हिमात्यये ॥ ८ ॥
कथं हि धेनुः स्वं वत्सं गच्छन्तमनुगच्छति । अहं त्वानुगमिष्यामि यत्र वत्स गमिष्यसि ॥ ९ ॥

Perceiving Śrī Rāma resolved on carrying out the command of his father, Kausalyā spoke as follows to her most pious son, her voice choked with tears :—(1) "(Ah) born of me through Daśaratha, how will the pious-minded boy, who has never known sorrow and who speaks kindly to all created beings, live on grains gleaned from a market-place (after the heaps collected there for sale have been disposed of)? (2) How shall this boy, the same Rāma whose (very) dependants and servants partake of dainty dishes, eat roots and fruits in the forest ? (3) Who will believe this story that Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), the pet child of the emperor and rich in excellences, is being exiled ? And who will not be alarmed to hear this ? (4) Sure enough, in this world, O Rāma, where you, who are so charming, are going to retire to the forest, destiny (alone) is mighty and rules all. (5) Emaciating me to a remarkable degree, my son, this huge and incomparable fire of grief,—which has its source in the mind, is fanned by the wind of your (impending) absence and fed by the firewood of anguish caused by weeping and is nourished by oblations poured in the shape of tears welling up at the time of weeping, (nay) which is crowned with voluminous smoke in the form of intensity of thought, which springs up from anxiety concerning your return (from exile) at the end of fourteen years) and which grows in intensity through pumping in the form of respiration—will consume me, bereft of you, here in the same way as a forest fire burns away dry wood and grass etc. at the end of winter. (6—8) It is well known how a milch cow follows its roaming calf. I (too) shall (accordingly) follow you whithersoever, my child, you will go." (9)

यथा निगदितं मात्रा तद् वाक्यं पुरुषर्षभः । श्रुत्वा रामोऽब्रवीद् वाक्यं मातरं भृशदुःखिताम् ॥१०॥
कैकेय्या वञ्चितो राजा मयि चारण्यमाश्रिते । भवत्या च परित्यक्तो न नूनं वर्तयिष्यति ॥११॥
भर्तुः किल परित्यागो नृशंसः केवलं स्त्रियाः । स भवत्या न कर्तव्यो मनसापि विगर्हितः ॥१२॥
यावज्जीवति काकुत्स्थः पिता मे जगतीपतिः । शुश्रूषा क्रियतां तावत् स हि धर्मः सनातनः ॥१३॥
एवमुक्ता तु रामेण कौसल्या शुभदर्शना । तथेत्युवाच सुप्रीता राममक्लिष्टकारिणम् ॥१४॥
एवमुक्तस्तु वचनं रामो धर्मभृतां वरः । भूयस्तामब्रवीद् वाक्यं मातरं भृशदुःखिताम् ॥१५॥
मया चैव भवत्या च कर्तव्यं वचनं पितुः । राजा भर्ता गुरुः श्रेष्ठः सर्वेषामीश्वरः प्रभुः ॥१६॥
इमानि तु महारण्ये विहृत्य नव पञ्च च । वर्षाणि परमप्रीत्या स्थास्यामि वचने तव ॥१७॥
एवमुक्ता प्रियं पुत्रं वाष्पपूर्णानना तदा । उवाच परमार्ता तु कौसल्या सुतवत्सला ॥१८॥
आसां राम सपत्नीनां वस्तुं मध्ये न मे क्षमम् । नय मामपि काकुत्स्थ वनं वन्यां मृगीमिव ॥१९॥
यदि ते गमने बुद्धिः कृता पितुरपेक्षया ।

Duly hearing the aforesaid speech uttered by his mother, Śrī Rāma, a jewel among men, replied as follows to his mother, who was extremely distressed :—(10) "Betrayed by Kaikeyī and (particularly) when I have retired to the forest, the king will surely not survive if he is further deserted by you. (11) Moreover, it is sheer cruelty on the part of a woman to desert her husband. That should not be done by you even with the mind; (for) it is highly deprecated. (12) So long as my father, Emperor Daśaratha (a scion of Kakutstha) survives, let service be rendered to him (by you); for such is the eternal moral code." (13) Feeling highly delighted when admonished as aforesaid by Śrī Rāma, Kausalyā of benign aspect, for her part, said "Amen!" to Śrī Rāma, who did things without undergoing any exertion. (14) Addressed in the foregoing words, Śrī Rāma, the foremost among those upholding the cause of righteousness, however, further spoke as follows to his aforesaid mother, who was feeling deeply distressed :—(15) "Father's command must be carried out by you as well as by me. He is the king, supporter, elder, superior, controller and master of (us) all. (16) Having sported in some great forest during the ensuing nine years and five with supreme delight, I shall (then) continue to be at your beck and call." (17) Spoken to in these words, Kausalyā, for her part, who was full of affection for her son and was extremely miserable, then replied to her beloved son (as follows), her face bathed in tears :—(18) "It is not desirable for me, O Rāma, to live in the midst of these co-wives. If you have made up your mind to depart in deference to the wish of your father, (pray) take me as well to the forest, O scion of Kakutstha, (even) as one would take a wild female deer."

तां तथा रुदतीं रामो रुदन् वचनमब्रवीत् ॥२०॥
जीवन्त्या हि स्त्रिया भर्ता दैवतं प्रभुरेव च । भवत्या मम चैवाद्य राजा प्रभवति प्रभुः ॥२१॥
नह्यनाथा वयं राज्ञा लोकनाथेन धीमता । भरतश्चापि धर्मात्मा सर्वभूतप्रियंवदः ॥२२॥
भवतीमनुवर्तेत स हि धर्मरतः सदा । यथा मयि तु निष्क्रान्ते पुत्रशोकेन पार्थिवः ॥२३॥
श्रमं नावाप्नुयात् किंचिदप्रमत्ता तथा कुरु । दारुणश्चाप्ययं शोको यथैनं न विनाशयेत् ॥२४॥
राज्ञो वृद्धस्य सततं हितं चर समाहिता । व्रतोपवासनिरता या नारी परमोत्तमा ॥२५॥
भर्तारं नानुवर्तेत सा च पापगतिर्भवेत् । भर्तुः शुश्रूषया नारी लभते स्वर्गमुत्तमम् ॥२६॥
अपि या निर्नमस्कारा निवृत्ता देवपूजनात् । शुश्रूषामेव कुर्वीत भर्तुः प्रियहिते रता ॥२७॥
एष धर्मः स्त्रिया नित्यो वेदे लोके श्रुतः स्मृतः । अग्निकार्येषु च सदा सुमनोभिश्च देवताः ॥२८॥
पूज्यास्ते मत्कृते देवि ब्राह्मणाश्चैव सुव्रताः । एवं कालं प्रतीक्षस्व ममागमनकाङ्क्षिणी ॥२९॥
नियता नियताहारा भर्तृशुश्रूषणे रता । प्राप्स्यसे परमं कामं मयि पर्यागते सति ॥३०॥
यदि धर्मभृतां श्रेष्ठो धारयिष्यति जीवितम् ।

Śrī Rāma spoke as follows to his mother, who was weeping as aforesaid :—(19-20) "For a (married) woman, so long as she is alive, her husband indeed is her deity as well as her lord. The king, our master, holds sway over you as well as over me today. (21) With the wise king continuing as the ruler of the world, surely we are not masterless. And Bharata too is pious-minded, speaks kindly to all created beings and is ever devoted to righteousness. He will undoubtedly serve you. Carefully act in such a way that when I have departed (for the woods) the king may not suffer agony in the least on account of grief caused by separation from his son (myself). And, remaining (ever) vigilant, constantly do good to the aged king, so that this poignant grief may not bring about his extinction. Nay, that woman who, though extremely noble and keenly devoted to sacred observances and fasts, does not serve her husband, is sure to attain the destiny of a sinner. Through service to one's husband (on the other hand) even that woman who does not offer salutations (to anyone other than her husband) and is averse to the worship of gods secures the highest heaven. Intent on doing that which is pleasing and good to her husband, a (married) woman should, therefore do service to him alone: this is the lasting duty enjoined on a woman in the Vedas as well as in the Smṛti texts. Nay, while offering oblations to the fire, gods as well as celebrated Brahmans of noble vows should be worshipped with flowers and other articles for my sake, O godly lady ! Leading a regulated life and partaking of an austere fare, (nay) devoted to the service of your husband, bide time as aforesaid, longing for my return (from the forest). (In this way) you will attain the highest object of your desire when I have duly returned (from the forest), provided (of course) the emperor (the foremost of those upholding the cause of righteousness) retains his life.

एवमुक्ता तु रामेण बाष्पपर्याकुलेक्षणा ॥३१॥
कौसल्या पुत्रशोकार्ता रामं वचनमब्रवीत् । गमने सुकृतां बुद्धिं न ते शक्नोमि पुत्रक ॥३२॥
विनिवर्तयितुं वीर नूनं कालो दुरत्ययः । गच्छ पुत्र त्वमेकाग्रो भद्रं तेऽस्तु सदा विभो ॥३३॥
पुनस्त्वयि निवृत्ते तु भविष्यामि गतक्लमा ।

प्रत्यागते महाभागे कृतार्थे चरितव्रते । पितुरानृण्यतां प्राप्ते स्वपिष्ये परमं सुखम् ॥३४॥
कृतान्तस्य गतिः पुत्र दुर्विभाव्या सदा भुवि । यस्त्वां संचोदयति मे वच आच्छिद्य राघव ॥३५॥
गच्छेदानीं महाबाहो क्षेमेण पुनरागतः । नन्दयिष्यसि मां पुत्र साम्ना श्लक्ष्णेन चारुणा ॥३६॥
अपीदानीं स कालः स्याद् वनात् प्रत्यागतं पुनः । यत् त्वां पुत्रक पश्येयं जटावल्कलधारिणम् ॥३७॥
तथा हि रामं वनवासनिश्चितं ददर्श देवी परमेण चेतसा ।
उवाच रामं शुभलक्षणं वचो बभूव च स्वस्त्ययनाभिकाङ्क्षिणी ॥३८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुर्विंशः सर्गः ॥ २४ ॥

Spoken to in these words by Śrī Rāma, however, Kausalyā, who was stricken with grief caused by (the thought of the impending) separation from her son, spoke as follows to Śrī Rāma, her eyes blinded with tears:—"I cannot change your resolution to depart, which has been deliberately made, O dear and heroic son! Surely destiny is hard to supersede. (Therefore) depart you, my son, with an unwavering mind. Let good betide you at all times, O mighty son! (22—33) I shall be rid of affliction once more only when you have returned (to Ayodhya). I shall sleep most soundly (only) when you (my highly blessed son) return having accomplished your object and concluded your vow (of leading a forest life for fourteen long years) and (thereby) get square with your father. (34) The course of destiny in this world is always hard to perceive, my son,—the destiny which is urging you to depart setting aside my protest, O scion of Raghu! (35) Depart now, O mighty-armed prince! When safely come back, you shall delight me, my son, with delightful and sweet words of consolation. (36) Would that the time when I see you once more, my dear son, come back from the forest wearing matted locks and the bark of trees, turned this (very) moment!" (37) Inasmuch as the pious lady (Kausalyā) perceived with her penetrating mind that Śrī Rāma was resolved to take up his abode in the forest she spoke benedictory words to him and got inclined to perform rites o averting evil through recitation of sacred texts. (38)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-four in the Ayodhya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXV

Having received the mother's benedictions for the journey, Śrī Rāma falls at her feet and proceeds to the apartments of Sītā in order to see her.

सा विनीय तमायासमुपस्पृश्य जलं शुचि । चकार माता रामस्य मङ्गलानि मनस्विनी ॥ १ ॥
न शक्यसे वारयितुं गच्छेदानीं रघूत्तम । शीघ्रं च विनिवर्तस्व वर्तस्व च सतां क्रमे ॥ २ ॥
यं पालयसि धर्मं त्वं प्रीत्या च नियमेन च । स वै राघवशार्दूल धर्मस्त्वामभिरक्षतु ॥ ३ ॥
येभ्यः प्रणमसे पुत्र चैत्येष्वायतनेषु च । ते च त्वामभिरक्षन्तु वने सह महर्षिभिः ॥ ४ ॥

यानि दत्तानि तेऽस्त्राणि विश्वामित्रेण धीमता । तानि त्वामभिरक्षन्तु गुणैः समुदितं सदा ॥ ५ ॥
पितृशुश्रूषया पुत्र मातृशुश्रूषया तथा । सत्येन च महाबाहो चिरं जीवाभिरक्षितः ॥ ६ ॥
समित्कुशपवित्राणि वेद्यश्चायतनानि च ।
स्थण्डिलानि च विप्राणां शैला वृक्षाः क्षुपा ह्रदाः । पतङ्गाः पन्नगाः सिंहास्त्वां रक्षन्तु नरोत्तम ॥ ७ ॥

Getting over through ratiocination the aforesaid agony (caused by the thought of the impending separation from Śrī Rāma) and sipping (a little) pure water (in order to counteract the impurity occasioned by shedding tears) the high-minded mother Kausalyā performed rites conducive to the welfare of Śrī Rāma. (1) (She said) "(Since) your departure cannot be stopped, depart now, O jewel among the Raghus ! Nay, follow in the footsteps of the righteous (by redeeming your word of honour) and return soon (after serving the term of your exile). (2) May that piety (itself) protect you on all sides,—the piety which you scrupulously observe with love, O tiger among the scions of Raghu ! (3) May those too to whom you humbly bow at cross-roads as well as in temples, my sos, protect you on all sides along with eminent Ṛṣis. (4) May those mystic missiles (also) that were imparted to you by the learned Viśwāmitra protect on all sides you, who are ever illumined by your excellences. (5) Protected on all sides by the service you have rendered to your father and mothers as well as by your truthfulness, my mighty-armed son, may you live long ! (6) May (the deities presiding over) wooden sticks used for feeding the sacred fire, blades of the sacred Kuśa grass and rings of Kuśa grass (worn on the fourth finger on sacrificial occasions), sacrificial altars, temples and sites selected by Brahmans for worship of gods, as well as mountains, trees, bushes, large and deep pools of water, birds, reptiles and lions protect you. O jewel among men ! (7)

स्वस्ति साध्याश्च विश्वे च मरुतश्च महर्षिभिः । स्वस्ति धाता विधाता च स्वस्ति पूषा भगोऽर्यमा ॥ ८ ॥
लोकपालाश्च ते सर्वे वासवप्रमुखास्तथा । ऋतवः षट् च ते सर्वे मासाः संवत्सराः क्षपाः ॥ ९ ॥
दिनानि च मुहूर्ताश्च स्वस्ति कुर्वन्तु ते सदा । श्रुतिः स्मृतिश्च धर्मश्च पातु त्वां पुत्र सर्वतः ॥१०॥
स्कन्दश्च भगवान् देवः सोमश्च सबृहस्पतिः । सप्तर्षयो नारदश्च ते त्वां रक्षन्तु सर्वतः ॥११॥
ते चापि सर्वतः सिद्धा दिशश्च सदिगीश्वराः । स्तुता मया वने तस्मिन् पान्तु त्वां पुत्र नित्यशः ॥१२॥
शैलाः सर्वे समुद्राश्च राजा वरुण एव च । द्यौरन्तरिक्षं पृथिवी वायुश्च सचराचरः ॥१३॥
नक्षत्राणि च सर्वाणि ग्रहाश्च सह दैवतैः । अहोरात्रे तथा संध्ये पान्तु त्वां वनमाश्रितम् ॥१४॥
ऋतवश्चापि षट् चान्ये मासाः संवत्सरास्तथा । कलाश्च काष्ठाश्च तथा तव शर्म दिशन्तु ते ॥१५॥
महावनेऽपि चरतो मुनिवेषस्य धीमतः । तथा देवाश्च दैत्याश्च भवन्तु सुखदाः सदा ॥१६॥

"Nay, may the Sādhyas and the Viśwedevas (two different classes of gods) and the wind-gods along with eminent Ṛṣis ensure your happiness; may the Cosmic Person and the creator bring happiness to you. May the gods Pūṣā, Bhaga and Aryamā (three of the twelve sons of Aditi) and the well-known guardians of the spheres with Indra at their head, as also (the deities presiding over) the six seasons, all the months, years, nights and days and hours always do good to you. Again, may Veda, the Smṛti texts taken as one body and piety (incarnate) protect you, my son, from all dangers. (8—10) May Lord Skanda (the younger son of Lord Śiva) and the moon-god along with the sage Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods), the well-known seven Ṛṣis as well as Sage Nārada guard you on all sides. (11) Nay, glorified by me, may the celebrated Siddhas as well as the (four) quarters along with the guardians of the quarters protect you, my son, from day to day on all sides in that forest (which you are going to live in). (12) May all the (seven principal) mountains and oceans as well as the king of the oceans, Varuṇa (the god presiding over the waters), heaven, earth, the region intervening them, the atmosphere as well as the animate and inanimate creation, nay, all the lunar mansions as well as the sun and the planets along with the gods presiding over them, the deities presiding over day and night and the morning and evening twilights protect you while you remain in the forest. (13-14) Again, may the deities presiding over the six seasons, thei ntercalary months and the years containing such months and even so measures of time known by the names of Kalā (equivalent to one minute) and Kāṣṭhā (1/30 of a Kalā or two seconds) grant you happiness. And may the gods and the Daityas (demons) too ever bestow happiness on you while you roam about in a large forest, clad as a hermit and full of wisdom. (15-16)

राक्षसानां पिशाचानां रौद्राणां क्रूरकर्मणाम् । क्रव्यादानां च सर्वेषां मा भूत् पुत्रक ते भयम् ॥१७॥
प्लवगा वृश्चिका दंशा मशकाश्चैव कानने । सरीसृपाश्च कीटाश्च मा भूवन् गहने तव ॥१८॥

"Let there be no fear to you, my dear son, from the fierce ogres, fiends of cruel deeds and all carnivorous animals. (17) Let there be no monkeys, scorpions, gnats and mosquitoes, reptiles and insects in the impenetrable forest occupied by you. (18)

महाद्विपाश्च सिंहाश्च व्याघ्रा ऋक्षाश्च दंष्ट्रिणः । महिषाः शृङ्गिणो रौद्रा न ते द्रुह्यन्तु पुत्रक ॥१९॥
नृमांसभोजना रौद्रा ये चान्ये सर्वजातयः । मा च त्वां हिंसिषुः पुत्र मया सम्पूजितास्त्विह ॥२०॥
आगमास्ते शिवाः सन्तु सिध्यन्तु च पराक्रमाः । सर्वसम्पत्तयो राम स्वस्तिमान् गच्छ पुत्रक ॥२१॥
स्वस्ति तेऽस्त्वान्तरिक्षेभ्यः पार्थिवेभ्यः पुनः पुनः । सर्वेभ्यश्चैव देवेभ्यो ये च ते परिपन्थिनः ॥२२॥
शुक्रः सोमश्च सूर्यश्च धनदोऽथ यमस्तथा । पान्तु त्वामर्चिता राम दण्डकारण्यवासिनम् ॥२३॥
अग्निर्वायुस्तथा धूमो मन्त्राश्चर्षिमुखच्युताः । उपस्पर्शनकाले तु पान्तु त्वां रघुनन्दन ॥२४॥
सर्वलोकप्रभुर्ब्रह्मा भूतकर्तृ तथर्षयः । ये च शेषाः सुरास्ते तु रक्षन्तु वनवासिनम् ॥२५॥

"Let not lordly elephants, lions, tigers, bears and other carnivorous animals and fierce buffaloes with prominent horns be hostile to you, my dear son! (19) And let not other (ferocious) man-eaters, belonging to all species (of living beings) and propitiated by me here, kill you, my son! (20) May your pathways be propitious and let your undertaking meet with success. May all kinds of wealth (of the forest) be at your disposal, O Rāma! Depart you happily, my beloved son! (21) May you enjoy security time and again against aerial beings and earthly creatures as well as against all the gods as also against those who are your adversaries. (22) Worshipped by me, O Rāma, may (the deities presiding over the planets) Venus and the moon as also the sun and Kubera (the god of riches) and Yama (the god of retribution) protect you while you dwell in the forest of Daṇḍaka. (23) May (the gods presiding over) fire, the air and smoke as well as the sacred texts that have escaped from the lips of Ṛṣis (and that will be uttered by you) actually protect you at the time of sipping water and bathing, O scion of Raghu ! (24) May Brahmā, the suzerain lord of all the worlds, Brahma (the Infinite, responsible for the existence of all created beings) and the Ṛṣis as well as the gods that have not so far been mentioned by me guard you while you reside in the forest." (25)

इति माल्यैः सुरगणान् गन्धैश्चापि यशस्विनी । स्तुतिभिश्चानुरूपाभिरानर्चायतलोचना ॥२६॥
ज्वलनं समुपादाय ब्राह्मणेन महात्मना । हावयामास विधिना राममङ्गलकारणात् ॥२७॥
घृतं श्वेतानि माल्यानि समिधश्चैव सर्षपान् । उपसम्पादयामास कौसल्या परमाङ्गना ॥२८॥
उपाध्यायः स विधिना हुत्वा शान्तिमनामयम् । हुतहव्यावशेषेण बाह्यं बलिमकल्पयत् ॥२९॥
मधुदध्यक्षतघृतैः स्वस्तिवाच्यं द्विजांस्ततः । वाचयामास रामस्य वने स्वस्त्ययनक्रियाम् ॥३०॥
ततस्तस्मै द्विजेन्द्राय राममाता यशस्विनी । दक्षिणां प्रददौ काम्यां राघवं चेदमब्रवीत् ॥३१॥

Saying so, the illustrious Kausalyā (who had large eyes) worshipped the various gods with flowers and perfumes too as well as by means of hymns befitting them. (26) Duly procuring fire, she caused oblations to be poured into it with due ceremony for the welfare of Śrī Rāma by a high-souled Brahman. (27) Kausalyā, the lady *par excellence*, made available (to the Brahman) ghee, white flowers, pieces of firewood (for feeding the sacrificial fire) and mustard seeds as well. (28) Having poured oblations into the sacred fire according to the scriptural ordinance for the sake of security and health (of her son) the priest offered obtations (to Indra and the other nine guardians of the ten directions) outside the area reserved for fire-worship with the remnants of materials used as offering to the fire. (29) She then got Brahmans,—who were supplied with honey, curds, unbroken grains of rice and ghee in order to enable them to invoke blessings (on Śrī Rāma) by the repetition of certain Mantras,—to utter prayers for the welfare of Śrī Rāma in the forest. (30) The illustrious Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother) next bestowed on the aforesaid leader of Brahmans his fee as desired by him and spoke as follows to Śrī Rāma :—(31)

यन्मङ्गलं सहस्राक्षे सर्वदेवनमस्कृते । वृत्रनाशे समभवत् तत् ते भवतु मङ्गलम् ॥३२॥
यन्मङ्गलं सुपर्णस्य विनताकल्पयत् पुरा । अमृतं प्रार्थयानस्य तत् ते भवतु मङ्गलम् ॥३३॥
अमृतोत्पादने दैत्यान् घ्नतो वज्रधरस्य यत् । अदितिर्मङ्गलं प्रादात् तत् ते भवतु मङ्गलम् ॥३४॥
त्रिविक्रमान् प्रक्रमतो विष्णोरतुलतेजसः । यदासीन्मङ्गलं राम तत् ते भवतु मङ्गलम् ॥३५॥
ऋषयः सागरा द्वीपा वेदा लोका दिशश्च ताः । मङ्गलानि महाबाहो दिशन्तु शुभमङ्गलम् ॥३६॥
इति पुत्रस्य शेषाश्च कृत्वा शिरसि भामिनी । गन्धैश्चापि समालभ्य राममायतलोचना ॥३७॥
औषधीं च सुसिद्धार्थां विशल्यकरणीं शुभाम् । चकार रक्षां कौसल्या मन्त्रैरभिजजाप च ॥३८॥
उवाचापि प्रहृष्टेव सा दुःखवशवर्तिनी । वाङ्मात्रेण न भावेन वाचा संसज्जमानया ॥३९॥

"May the same victory woo you as wooed Indra (the thousand-eyed god), who is hailed by all the gods on the destruction of the demon Vṛtra. (32) May the same blessing descend on you as Vinatā (the mother of Garuḍa) invoked in the past on Garuḍa, who sought for nectar. (33) Let the same blessing come to you as Aditi (the mother of the gods) invoked on Indra (the wielder of the thunderbolt) while he was (engaged in) making short work of the Daityas at the time of extracting nectar (out of the ocean of milk). (34) Let the same good fortune come to you as attended Lord Viṣṇu, who is endowed with immense glory, while He took the three (well-known) strides (in order to measure the three worlds), O Rāma ! (35) May Ṛṣis, the (seven) oceans, the (same number of) Dwīpas (principal divisions of the globe girdled by them), the (four) Vedas, the (three) spheres and the well-known (four) quarters confer blessings, (nay) the blessing of (all) blessings on you, O mighty-armed prince !" (36) Saying so and fixing unbroken grains of rice on Śrī Rāma's forehead (as a form of benediction), and also daubing him with sandal-pastes (of various kinds), the large-eyed Kausalyā, a proud woman, fastened about his wrist by way of an amulet a herb known by the name of Viśalyakaraṇī (so called because it helps in painlessly extracting an arrow stuck into one's body), whose efficacy had been amply proved, with the recitation of sacred texts and (further) muttered the Mantras in order to heighten its virtue. (37-38) (Nay) she also spoke the Mantras aloud like one overjoyed (anxious as she was not to mar the joy and damp the enthusiasm of Śrī Rāma), although she was in the grip of sorrow and repeated the Mantras only mechanically in a faltering voice and not with her heart. (39)

आनम्य मूर्ध्नि चाघ्राय परिष्वज्य यशस्विनी । अवदत् पुत्रमिष्टार्थो गच्छ राम यथासुखम् ॥४०॥
अरोगं सर्वसिद्धार्थमयोध्यां पुनरागतम् । पश्यामि त्वां सुखं वत्स संधितं राजवर्त्मसु ॥४१॥
प्रणष्टदुःखसंकल्पा हर्षविद्योतितानना । द्रक्ष्यामि त्वां वनात् प्राप्तं पूर्णचन्द्रमिवोदितम् ॥४२॥
भद्रासनगतं राम वनवासादिहागतम् । द्रक्ष्यामि च पुनस्त्वां तु तीर्णवन्तं पितुर्वचः ॥४३॥
मङ्गलैरुपसम्पन्नो वनवासादिहागतः । वध्वाश्च मम नित्यं त्वं कामान् संवर्ध याहि भोः ॥४४॥
मयार्चिता देवगणाः शिवादयो महर्षयो भूतगणाः सुरोरगाः ।
अभिप्रयातस्य वनं चिराय ते हितानि कांक्षन्तु दिशश्च राघव ॥४५॥

Bending low and smelling the head of Śrī Rāma and embracing him, the illustrious lady (Kausalyā) said to Śrī Rāma, "Depart at ease, O Rāma, accomplished of purpose as you are. (40) I shall happily see you come back in sound health to Ayodhya having all your objects accomplished and moving at peace (with all) on the main roads (of Ayodhya). (41) All my thoughts of sorrow completely vanished and my face illumined with joy I shall behold you returned from the forest like the full moon become visible on the horizon. (42) I shall undoubtedly see you returned here from your sojourn in the forest, having implemented the word of your father, and installed on the throne, O Rāma ! (43) Having returned here from the forest and clad in festal robes and adorned with festal ornaments, ever fulfil the desires of my daughter-in-law. Depart (now), O Rāma ! (44) Worshipped by me, let the hosts of gods headed by Lord Śiva, the eminent Ṛṣis, the multitudes of spirits, the celestial serpents and the deities presiding over the (four) quarters wish well for a long time of you when you have set out for the forest, O scion of Raghu !" (45)

अतीव चाश्रुप्रतिपूर्णलोचना समाप्य च स्वस्त्ययनं यथाविधि ।
प्रदक्षिणं चापि चकार राघवं पुनः पुनश्चापि निरीक्ष्य सस्वजे ॥४६॥

तया हि देव्या च कृतप्रदक्षिणो निपीड्य मातुश्चरणौ पुनः पुनः ।
जगाम सीतानिलयं महायशाः स राघवः प्रज्वलितस्तया श्रिया ॥४७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चविंशः सर्गः ॥ २५ ॥

Nay, having finished the (sacred) rite of invoking blessings (on Śrī Rāma) with due ceremony, Kausalyā whose eyes were overflowing with tears, further went clockwise round Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) and, gazing on him again and again, embraced him. (46) Circumambulated clockwise by the said pious lady and pressing (as a token of reverence) his mother's feet again and again, that highly illustrious scion of Raghu, irradiated as he was by the splendour occasioned by the mother's benedictory rites, proceeded to Sītā's apartments. (47)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-five in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षड्विंशः सर्गः

Canto XXVI

Beholding Śrī Rāma depressed in spirits and lustreless with frustration writ large on his countenance, Sītā, who knew nothing about the interruption of his installation and had been eagerly and joyfully awaiting his return, inquires about the cause of his dejection and is told how his installation has been stopped and how he is going to be sent into exile by his father, and exhorted to look after her father-in-law and mothers-in-law as before and to treat Bharata and Śatrughna as her own brothers or sons and never to harbour malice towards them.

अभिवाद्य तु कौसल्यां रामः सम्प्रस्थितो वनम् । कृतस्वस्त्ययनो मात्रा धर्मिष्ठे वर्त्मनि स्थितः ॥ १ ॥
विराजयन् राजसुतो राजमार्गं नरैर्वृतम् । हृदयान्याममन्थेव जनस्य गुणवत्तया ॥ २ ॥
वैदेही चापि तत् सर्वं न शुश्राव तपस्विनी । तदेव हृदि तस्याश्च यौवराज्याभिषेचनम् ॥ ३ ॥
देवकार्यं स्म सा कृत्वा कृतज्ञा हृष्टचेतना । अभिज्ञा राजधर्माणां राजपुत्री प्रतीक्षति ॥ ४ ॥

Saluting Kausalyā while about to set out for the forest, Śrī Rāma, for his part, on whom blessings had been invoked by his mother and who stuck to the most righteous path, agitated as it were the hearts of the people (that had gathered there) through his richness in excellences (of various kinds), illumining (at the same time by his very proximity) the king's highway crowded with men (anxious to have a look at the prince). (1-2) Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory), in her turn, who had been observing austere vows, had not so far heard all that had happened in the meantime (causing interruption in the installation of Śrī Rāma and making for his exile into the forest), so that the aforesaid installation alone of Śrī Rāma in the office of Prince Regent stood foremost in her heart. (3) Having offered worship to the gods, the celebrated princess, who knew her duty and was conversant with the moral code prescribed for kings, was waiting for her husband with a delighted mind. (4)

प्रविवेशाथ रामस्तु स्ववेश्म सुविभूषितम् । प्रहृष्टजनसम्पूर्णं ह्रिया किंचिदवाङ्मुखः ॥ ५ ॥
अथ सीता समुत्पत्य वेपमाना च तं पतिम् । अपश्यच्छोकसंतप्तं चिन्ताव्याकुलितेन्द्रियम् ॥ ६ ॥
तां दृष्ट्वा स हि धर्मात्मा न शशाक मनोगतम् । तं शोकं राघवः सोढुं ततो विवृततां गतः ॥ ७ ॥

In the meantime Śrī Rāma for his part entered his gynaeceum, which was most tastefully decorated and was crowded with overjoyed attendants, his head bent somewhat low through bashfulness. (5) Forthwith springing up from her seat, Sītā tremblingly saw her celebrated husband stricken with grief, his mind perplexed with anxiety. (6) Seeing her the said Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), whose mind was given to righteousness, could not contain that grief existing in his mind; hence it became manifest. (7)

विवर्णवदनं दृष्ट्वा तं प्रस्विन्नममर्षणम् । आह दुःखाभिसंतप्ता किमिदानीमिदं प्रभो ॥ ८ ॥
अद्य बार्हस्पतः श्रीमान् युक्तः पुष्येण राघव । प्रोच्यते ब्राह्मणैः प्राज्ञैः केन त्वमसि दुर्मनाः ॥ ९ ॥
न ते शतशलाकेन जलफेननिभेन च । आवृतं वदनं वल्गुच्छत्रेणाभिविराजते ॥१०॥
व्यजनाभ्यां च मुख्याभ्यां शतपत्रनिभेक्षणम् । चन्द्रहंसप्रकाशाभ्यां वीज्यते न तवाननम् ॥११॥
वाग्मिनो वन्दिनश्चापि प्रहृष्टास्त्वां नरर्षभ । स्तुवन्तो नाद्य दृश्यन्ते मङ्गलैः सूतमागधाः ॥१२॥
न ते क्षौद्रं च दधि च ब्राह्मणा वेदपारगाः । मूर्ध्नि मूर्धाभिषिक्तस्य ददति स्म विधानतः ॥१३॥
न त्वां प्रकृतयः सर्वाः श्रेणीमुख्याश्च भूषिताः । अनुव्रजितुमिच्छन्ति पौरजानपदास्तथा ॥१४॥
चतुर्भिर्वेगसम्पन्नैर्हयैः काञ्चनभूषणैः । मुख्यः पुष्परथो युक्तः किं न गच्छति तेऽग्रतः ॥१५॥
न हस्ती चाग्रतः श्रीमान् सर्वलक्षणपूजितः । प्रयाणे लक्ष्यते वीर कृष्णमेघगिरिप्रभः ॥१६॥
न च काञ्चनचित्रं ते पश्यामि प्रियदर्शन । भद्रासनं पुरस्कृत्य यान्तं वीर पुरस्सरम् ॥१७॥
अभिषेको यदा सज्जः किमिदानीमिदं तव । अपूर्वो मुखवर्णश्च न प्रहर्षश्च लक्ष्यते ॥१८॥

Seeing him pale of countenance, bathed in perspiration and unable to restrain his grief, Sītā (who felt sore stricken with grief) said, "What is this now, my lord? (8) The auspicious constellation Puṣya (which is presided over by the sage Bṛhaspati and) which is propitious (for installation) is in the ascendant today. The ceremony is recommended by learned Brahmans when the moon is in conjunction with the said asterism, O scion of Raghu! Wherefore (then) are you ill at ease? (9) Your lovely countenance does not shine splendidly as it should when canopied by an umbrella white as foam and provided with a hundred ribs. (10) Nor is your lotus-eyed face (I find) being fanned (as it should) with a pair of excellent *chowries* shining like the moon and a swan. (11) Nor (again) are overjoyed minstrels and bards or even eloquent panegyrists seen extolling you in words full of benedictions today, O jewel among men! (12) Brahmans well-versed in the Vedas have not poured with due ceremony honey and curds along with water from holy places on your head after you had taken a full bath drenching your head too. (13) Nor do all the king's ministers and the foremost among the traders, decked with ornaments, nor again the citizens and people belonging to the countryside seek to follow you (in state). (14) How does an excellent chariot used for travelling or pleasure and driven by four swift horses decked with gold ornaments not go ahead of you ? (15) Nor is a glorious elephant, adorned with all noble characteristics and resembling a mountain crowned with a dark cloud, seen ahead of you in your drive (back to the gynaeceum), O gallant prince ? (16) Nor again do I perceive marching before you a servant carrying (in his hand) an excellent seat embroidered with a gold figure, O valiant prince of delightful appearance ! (17) When the preparations for your consecration are complete, how is it that the colour of your face appears so changed and no great joy is perceived (in you) at this moment ?" (18)

इतीव विलपन्तीं तां प्रोवाच रघुनन्दनः । सीते तत्रभवांस्तातः प्रव्राजयति मां वनम् ॥१९॥
कुले महति सम्भूते धर्मज्ञे धर्मचारिणी । शृणु जानकि येनेदं क्रमेणाद्यागतं मम ॥२०॥
राज्ञा सत्यप्रतिज्ञेन पित्रा दशरथेन वै । कैकेय्यै मम मात्रे तु पुरा दत्तौ महावरौ ॥२१॥
तयाद्य मम सज्जेऽस्मिन्नभिषेके नृपोद्यते । प्रचोदितः ससमयो धर्मेण प्रतिनिर्जितः ॥२२॥
चतुर्दश हि वर्षाणि वस्तव्यं दण्डके मया । पित्रा मे भरतश्चापि यौवराज्ये नियोजितः ॥२३॥
सोऽहं त्वामागतो द्रष्टुं प्रस्थितो विजनं वनम् । भरतस्य समीपे ते नाहं कत्थ्यः कदाचन ॥२४॥
ऋद्धियुक्ता हि पुरुषा न सहन्ते परस्तवम् । तस्मान्न ते गुणाः कत्थ्या भरतस्याग्रतो मम ॥२५॥
अहं ते नानुवक्तव्यो विशेषेण कदाचन । अनुकूलतया शक्यं समीपे तस्य वर्तितुम् ॥२६॥
तस्मै दत्तं नृपतिना यौवराज्यं सनातनम् । स प्रसाद्यस्त्वया सीते नृपतिश्च विशेषतः ॥२७॥
अहं चापि प्रतिज्ञां तां गुरोः समनुपालयन् । वनमद्यैव यास्यामि स्थिरीभव मनस्विनि ॥२८॥

Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) replied (as follows) to Sītā, who was wailing as aforesaid:—"My adorable father, O Sītā, is sending me into exile to the forest. (19) Hear in order of sequence, O daughter of Janaka, descended (as you are) in a noble family, knowing (as you do) what is right and practising virtue, wherefore this exile has fallen to my lot today. (20) Indeed a couple of momentous boons were actually granted in the days gone by in favour of my (half-) mother, Kaikeyī, by my father, King Daśaratha, who is (so) true to his promise. (21) The preparations for my consecration, arranged through the emperor's endeavour, being complete today, the king was pressed hard by her to grant those boons and, having been bound with an oath, was completely brought under her thumb on grounds of morality. (22) I must take up my abode in the forest of Daṇḍaka for fourteen years and furthermore Bharata has been nominated by my father for the office of Prince Regent. (23) As such I have come to see you while on my way to the lonely forest (of Daṇḍaka). I should never be praised by you in the presence of Bharata (whenever he calls on you in order to pay his respects to you, lest you should forfeit his goodwill). (24) For, men endowed with power and fortune do not brook to hear the glorification of others. Therefore my virtues should never be extolled by you before Bharata. (25) I should never be exalted to the skies by you (even before your companions). You can stay with him (only) by behaving conformably to him. (26) The office of Prince Regent has been conferred on him by the king once for all. He should therefore be pleased by you, O. Sītā, more so because he is going to be the king as well. (27) Duly implementing the aforesaid pledge of my father, I for my part shall proceed to the forest this very day. (Please) remain firm, O high-minded lady ! (28)

याते च मयि कल्याणि वनं मुनिनिषेवितम् । व्रतोपवासपरया भवितव्यं त्वयानघे ॥२९॥
कल्यमुत्थाय देवानां कृत्वा पूजां यथाविधि । वन्दितव्यो दशरथः पिता मम जनेश्वरः ॥३०॥
माता च मम कौसल्या वृद्धा संतापकर्शिता । धर्ममेवाग्रतः कृत्वा त्वत्तः सम्मानमर्हति ॥३१॥
वन्दितव्याश्च ते नित्यं याः शेषा मम मातरः । स्नेहप्रणयसम्भोगैः समा हि मम मातरः ॥३२॥
भ्रातृपुत्रसमौ चापि द्रष्टव्यौ च विशेषतः । त्वया भरतशत्रुघ्नौ प्राणैः प्रियतरौ मम ॥३३॥
विप्रियं च न कर्तव्यं भरतस्य कदाचन । स हि राजा च वैदेहि देशस्य च कुलस्य च ॥३४॥
आराधिता हि शीलेन प्रयत्नैश्चोपसेविताः । राजानः सम्प्रसीदन्ति प्रकुप्यन्ति विपर्यये ॥३५॥
औरस्यानपि पुत्रान् हि त्यजन्त्यहितकारिणः । समर्थान् सम्प्रगृह्णन्ति जनानपि नराधिपाः ॥३६॥
सा त्वं वसेह कल्याणि राज्ञः समनुवर्तिनी । भरतस्य रता धर्मे सत्यव्रतपरायणा ॥३७॥
अहं गमिष्यामि महावनं प्रिये त्वया हि वस्तव्यमिहैव भामिनि ।
यथा व्यलीकं कुरुषे न कस्यचित् तथा त्वया कार्यमिदं वचो मम ॥३८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षड्विंशः सर्गः ॥ २६ ॥

Nay, when I have left for the forest, inhabited by ascetics, O blessed lady, you should take to sacred observances and fasts, O sinless one ! (29) Rising at dawn and after performing worship of the gods according to the scriptural ordinance, King Daśaratha, my father, must be saluted by you. (30) My mother, Kausalyā too, aged as she is and emaciated through agony, deserves to be duly respected by you since you must keep virtue foremost in your mind. (31) Those others too who are related to me as mothers deserve to be saluted by you every day since (all) mothers are equal in my eyes in point of affection and goodwill (they cherish for me) and the way in which they have looked after me (when I was a child). (32) (My half-brothers) Bharata and Śatrughna too, who are dearer to me than life, should be particularly regarded by you as your (own) brothers or sons. (33) No offence should be given to Bharata at any time; for he is (now) as it were the ruler of our country as well as of our family, O princess of the Videha territory ! (34) Kings, really speaking, get highly pleased when propitiated through good conduct and served with continued endeavours and feel enraged otherwise. (35) Rulers of men forsake even sons sprung from their own loins if they are adverse, and duly accept as their own even strangers who are friendly to them. (36) Dwell you as such in Ayodhya under the protection of the emperor and conformably to the will of Bharata, remaining devoted to righteousness and following sacred observances of unfailing efficacy, O blessed lady ! (37) I shall (immediately) proceed to the great forest (of Daṇḍaka), my darling; while you should live here only, O high-minded lady ! You should conduct yourself in such a way as not to offend anyone: this is my advice (to you). (38)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-six in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXVII

Exhorted by Śrī Rāma to stay in Ayodhya to look after his parents, Sītā submits in reply that she being his counterpart, her exile is implied in his and insists on her being taken with him since she would not be able to bear separation from him.

एवमुक्ता तु वैदेही प्रियार्हा प्रियवादिनी । प्रणयादेव संक्रुद्धा भर्तारमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
किमिदं भाषसे राम वाक्यं लघुतया ध्रुवम् । त्वया यदपहास्यं मे श्रुत्वा नरवरोत्तम ॥ २ ॥
वीराणां राजपुत्राणां शस्त्रास्त्रविदुषां नृप । अनर्हमयशस्यं च न श्रोतव्यं त्वयेरितम् ॥ ३ ॥
आर्यपुत्र पिता माता भ्राता पुत्रस्तथा स्नुषा । स्वानि पुण्यानि भुञ्जानाः स्वं स्वं भाग्यमुपासते ॥ ४ ॥
भर्तुर्भाग्यं तु नार्येका प्राप्नोति पुरुषर्षभ । अतश्चैवाहमादिष्टा वने वस्तव्यमित्यपि ॥ ५ ॥
न पिता नात्मजो वाऽऽत्मा न माता न सखीजनः । इह प्रेत्य च नारीणां पतिरेको गतिः सदा ॥ ६ ॥

Roused to indignation through sheer love when admonished as aforesaid, Sītā (the daughter of the king of the Videhas), for her part, who deserved kindness (from her husband) and (always) spoke kindly (to him), replied to her husband as follows :—(1) "Wherefore do you tender me this advice, which makes me look indeed so small, O Rāma, and which I am amused to hear, O jewel among the foremost of men! (2) What has been uttered by you is unworthy of valiant princes adept in the use of weapons and missiles, and disgraceful to them, O ruler of men, and is not worth listening to. (3) Father, mother, brother, son and daughter-in-law, my darling, reap each his or her destiny, enjoying their own merits (earned in previous lives). (4) A wife alone actually shares the fortune of her husband, O jewel among men! For this very reason I too stand enjoined (by my parents-in-law) that I should as well take up my abode in the forest. (5) In the case of women neither father nor son nor their own body nor mother nor their female companions serve as an asylum here or hereafter. The husband alone is their refuge at all times. (6)

यदि त्वं प्रस्थितो दुर्गं वनमद्यैव राघव । अग्रतस्ते गमिष्यामि मृद्नन्ती कुशकण्टकान् ॥ ७ ॥
ईर्ष्यां रोषं बहिष्कृत्य भुक्तशेषमिवोदकम् । नय मां वीर विस्रब्धः पापं मयि न विद्यते ॥ ८ ॥
प्रासादाग्रे विमानैर्वा वैहायसगतेन वा । सर्वावस्थागता भर्तुः पादच्छाया विशिष्यते ॥ ९ ॥
अनुशिष्टास्मि मात्रा च पित्रा च विविधाश्रयम् । नास्मि सम्प्रति वक्तव्या वर्तितव्यं यथा मया ॥१०॥
अहं दुर्गं गमिष्यामि वनं पुरुषवर्जितम् । नानामृगगणाकीर्णं शार्दूलगणसेवितम् ॥११॥
सुखं वने निवत्स्यामि यथैव भवने पितुः । अचिन्तयन्ती त्रीँल्लोकांश्चिन्तयन्ती पतिव्रतम् ॥१२॥
शुश्रूषमाणा ते नित्यं नियता ब्रह्मचारिणी । सह रंस्ये त्वया वीर वनेषु मधुगन्धिषु ॥१३॥

"If you depart this very day for the forest (of Daṇḍaka) which is difficult to penetrate, O scion of Raghu, I shall walk ahead of you crushing (under my soles) blades of (the sacred) Kuśa grass and thorns (that lie in the way). (7) Casting away envy (at my courage in voluntarily offering to accompany you to the forest) and wrath (at my insolence in flouting your command to stay in Ayodhya), confidently take me (with you) as one would take water remaining (in one's pot) after one has drunk it once, O valiant prince! No sin (that may deter you from taking me with you) abides in me. (8) Protection under the feet of one's husband under all circumstances is preferable (for a woman) to residence at the top of a palace, or living in aerial cars or coursing through the heavens (by virtue of mystic powers acquired through proficiency in Yoga). (9) I have been taught in many ways by my mother and father how I should conduct myself (in relation to you). (As such) I need not be instructed (in this behalf) at this juncture. (10) Unattended by any male servant I shall proceed with you to the forest (of Daṇḍaka) which is difficult to penetrate and teems with multitudes of beasts of various species and is infested with herds of tigers. (11) (Nay) caring not for the sovereignty of the three worlds and concentrating my thought on the vow of serving my husband (yourself), I shall live happily in the forest as I would in my paternal home. (12) Serving you every day with self-restraint and practising sacred vows, I shall sport with you in woodlands fragrant with (stores of) honey, O valiant prince! (13)

त्वं हि कर्तुं वने शक्तो राम सम्परिपालनम् । अन्यस्यापि जनस्येह किं पुनर्मम मानद ॥१४॥
साहं त्वया गमिष्यामि वनमद्य न संशयः । नाहं शक्या महाभाग निवर्तयितुमुद्यता ॥१५॥
फलमूलाशना नित्यं भविष्यामि न संशयः । न ते दुःखं करिष्यामि निवसन्ती त्वया सदा ॥१६॥
अग्रतस्ते गमिष्यामि भोक्ष्ये भुक्तवति त्वयि । इच्छामि परतः शैलान् पल्वलानि सरांसि च ॥१७॥
द्रष्टुं सर्वत्र निर्भीता त्वया नाथेन धीमता । हंसकारण्डवाकीर्णाः पद्मिनीः साधुपुष्पिताः ॥१८॥
इच्छेयं सुखिनी द्रष्टुं त्वया वीरेण संगता । अभिषेकं करिष्यामि तासु नित्यमनुव्रता ॥१९॥
सह त्वया विशालाक्ष रंस्ये परमनन्दिनी । एवं वर्षसहस्राणि शतं वापि त्वया सह ॥२०॥
व्यतिक्रमं न वेत्स्यामि स्वर्गेऽपि हि न मे मतः ।
स्वर्गेऽपि च विना वासो भविता यदि राघव । त्वया विना नरव्याघ्र नाहं तदपि रोचये ॥२१॥
अहं गमिष्यामि वनं सुदुर्गमं मृगायुतं वानरवारणैश्च ।
वने निवत्स्यामि यथा पितुर्गृहे तवैव पादावुपगृह्य सम्मता ॥२२॥
अनन्यभावामनुरक्तचेतसं त्वया वियुक्तां मरणाय निश्चिताम् ।
नयस्व मां साधु कुरुष्व याचनां नातो मया ते गुरुता भविष्यति ॥२३॥

(As for yourself), you are indeed capable of duly supporting in the forest (even) other men (who are not related to you) much more myself (who am your wedded wife and entirely dependent on you), O Rāma, who bestow honour on others! (14) Such as I am I shall undoubtedly accompany you to the forest today. Bent as I am (on going) I cannot be diverted (from my purpose), O highly fortunate prince! (15) I shall without doubt live on fruits and roots (alone) from day to day and shall not cause any annoyance to you while living with you. (16) I shall walk ahead of you and shall take my food (only) when you have finished your meal. After that I long to see mountains, ponds and lakes, remaining fearless everywhere with you as my wise protector. Accompanied by you, a heroic prince, I wish happily to see lotus-ponds teeming with swans and water-fowls and abounding in lotuses. (Nay) remaining devoted to you I shall daily take my bath in them and, full of supreme joy, sport with you, in this way, O large-eyed lord! Spending with you (say) thousands of years or even a hundred thousand years I shall never experience any sorrow. Heaven too will not be acceptable to me otherwise. Even if an abode devoid of you is vouchsafed to me in heaven, O scion of Raghu, I shall never find pleasure in it without you, O tiger among men! (17—21) I shall proceed to the forest (of Daṇḍaka) which is most difficult to penetrate and is infested with game (of various kinds) as well as with monkeys and elephants. (Nay) clinging to your feet alone and esteemed by you I shall dwell in the forest as though in my father's home. (22) (Therefore) grant my prayer and take me (with you to the forest)—me, who am exclusively devoted to you, whose mind is fondly attached to you and who am determined to die if disunited from you. You shall not be burdened by my being taken along with you." (23)

तथा ब्रुवाणामपि धर्मवत्सलां न च स्म सीतां नृवरो निनीषति ।
उवाच चैनां बहु संनिवर्तने वने निवासस्य च दुःखितां प्रति ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्तविंशः सर्गः ॥ २७ ॥

Śrī Rāma (the foremost among men) did not feel inclined in the least to take (to the forest) Sītā, who was (so) fond of righteousness and even though she spoke as aforesaid. Nay, in order to turn her away (from her resolve) he spoke to her a lot about the miseries attendant upon forest life. (24)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-seven in the Ayodkya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Valmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टाविंशः सर्गः

Canto XXVIII

Bringing home to Sītā the austerity and hardships of forest life Śrī Rāma tries once more to dissuade her from her insistence on accompanying him to the forest.

स एवं ब्रुवतीं सीतां धर्मज्ञां धर्मवत्सलः । न नेतुं कुरुते बुद्धिं वने दुःखानि चिन्तयन् ॥ १ ॥
सान्त्वयित्वा ततस्तां तु बाष्पदूषितलोचनाम् । निवर्तनार्थे धर्मात्मा वाक्यमेतदुवाच ह ॥ २ ॥
सीते महाकुलीनासि धर्मे च निरता सदा । इहाचरस्व धर्मं त्वं यथा मे मनसः सुखम् ॥ ३ ॥
सीते यथा त्वां वक्ष्यामि तथा कार्यं त्वयाबले । वने दोषा हि बहवो वसतस्तान् निबोध मे ॥ ४ ॥
सीते विमुच्यतामेषा वनवासकृता मतिः । बहुदोषं हि कान्तारं वनमित्यभिधीयते ॥ ५ ॥
हितबुद्ध्या खलु वचो मयैतदभिधीयते । सदा सुखं न जानामि दुःखमेव सदा वनम् ॥ ६ ॥

Bearing in mind the hardships one will be called upon to bear in the forest, Śrī Rāma, who was fond of righteousness, did not favour the idea of taking (along with him to the forest) Sītā, who knew what is right and spoke as aforesaid. (1) Soothing with kind words Sītā, whose eyes were bedimmed with tears, Śrī Rāma (whose mind was given to piety), for his part, so the tradition goes, then spoke as follows with a view to turning her back from her purpose:— (2) "Sītā, you are born of a high pedigree and are ever devoted to righteousness. Practise you virtue here so that gratification may be caused to my mind. (3) You should act as I am going to tell you, O frail Sītā! A dweller in forest, really speaking, suffers from many a handicap: (please) know them (from me). (4) Let this idea of living in a forest be finally relinquished, O Sītā; for a dense forest is spoken of as fraught with manifold dangers. (5) This advice is tendered by me with an eye to your welfare alone (and not because you will prove a burden to me). Not only there is no joy in a forest at all times; I (rather) know it to be an abode of perpetual misery. (6)

गिरिनिर्झरसम्भूता गिरिनिर्दरिवासिनाम् । सिंहानां निनदा दुःखाः श्रोतुं दुःखमतो वनम् ॥ ७ ॥
क्रीडमानाश्च विस्रब्धा मत्ताः शून्ये तथा मृगाः । दृष्ट्वा समभिवर्तन्ते सीते दुःखमतो वनम् ॥ ८ ॥
सग्राहाः सरितश्चैव पङ्कवत्यस्तु दुस्तराः । मत्तैरपि गजैर्नित्यमतो दुःखतरं वनम् ॥ ९ ॥
लताकण्टकसंकीर्णाः कृकवाकूपनादिताः । निरपाश्च सुदुःखाश्च मार्गा दुःखमतो वनम् ॥१०॥
सुप्यते पर्णशय्यासु स्वयंभग्नासु भूतले । रात्रिषु श्रमखिन्नेन तस्माद् दुःखमतो वनम् ॥११॥
अहोरात्रं च संतोषः कर्तव्यो नियतात्मना । फलैर्वृक्षावपतितैः सीते दुःखमतो वनम् ॥१२॥
उपवासश्च कर्तव्यो यथा प्राणेन मैथिलि । जटाभारश्च कर्तव्यो वल्कलाम्बरधारणम् ॥१३॥
देवतानां पितॄणां च कर्तव्यं विधिपूर्वकम् । प्राप्तानामतिथीनां च नित्यशः प्रतिपूजनम् ॥१४॥
कार्यस्त्रिरभिषेकश्च काले काले च नित्यशः । चरतां नियमेनैव तस्माद् दुःखतरं वनम् ॥१५॥
उपहारश्च कर्तव्यः कुसुमैः स्वयमाहृतैः । आर्षेण विधिना वेद्यां सीते दुःखमतो वनम् ॥१६॥
यथालब्धेन कर्तव्यः संतोषस्तेन मैथिलि । यताहारैर्वनचरैः सीते दुःखमतो वनम् ॥१७॥

Intensified by (the noise of) hill-streams, the roars of lions dwelling in mountain caves are unpleasant to hear. Hence a forest is full of misery. (7) Again, on seeing a human being wild beasts in rut sporting fearlessly in a lonely retreat attack him on all sides. Hence a forest is full of suffering. (8) Rivers are full of alligators and marshy too and as such difficult to cross even for elephants in rut. Hence a forest is ever exceedingly unpleasant. (9) The paths are waterless and extremely rugged, covered with creepers and thorns and rendered noisy by wild cocks. A forest is therefore full of misery. (10) Exhausted through toil (entailed by search for food in the shape of fruits etc.) one has to lie down during nights on beds of (dry) leaves fallen of themselves. Hence a forest is a source of great suffering. (11) By day and by night hunger has to be appeased with one's mind fully controlled by means of fruits fallen of themselves from trees, O Sītā! Hence a forest is full of privations. (12) Fasting has to be observed according to one's stamina, O princess of Mithila! (Nay), a mass of matted hair has to be worn (on the head) and one has to remain clad in the bark of trees. (13) Worship must be offered every day to the gods and the manes according to the scriptural ordinance and hospitality shown to unexpected guests arrived at his door. (14) By those living strictly in accordance with the scriptural ordinance ablutions must be performed thrice at the appointed time (*viz*, in the morning and evening as well as at midday) every day. Hence a forest is full of great hardships. (15) Worship must be offered according to the ordinance laid down by sages at the altar (prepared with one's own hands) by means of flowers gathered by oneself, O Sītā! Hence a forest is a source of suffering. (16) Eating sparingly dwellers in forests have to appease their hunger with fruits etc. obtained according to season, O Sītā, princess of Mithilā ! Hence a forest is full of hardships. (17)

अतीव वातस्तिमिरं बुभुक्षा चाति नित्यशः । भयानि च महान्त्यत्र ततो दुःखतरं वनम् ॥१८॥
सरीसृपाश्च बहवो बहुरूपाश्च भामिनि । चरन्ति पथि ते दर्पात् ततो दुःखतरं वनम् ॥१९॥
नदीनिलयनाः सर्पा नदीकुटिलगामिनः । तिष्ठन्त्यावृत्य पन्थानमतो दुःखतरं वनम् ॥२०॥
पतङ्गा वृश्चिकाः कीटा दंशाश्च मशकैः सह । बाधन्ते नित्यमबले सर्वं दुःखमतो वनम् ॥२१॥
द्रुमाः कण्टकिनश्चैव कुशाः काशाश्च भामिनि । वने व्याकुलशाखाग्रास्तेन दुःखतरं वनम् ॥२२॥
कायक्लेशाश्च बहवो भयानि विविधानि च । अरण्यवासे वसतो दुःखमेव सदा वनम् ॥२३॥
क्रोधलोभौ विमोक्तव्यौ कर्तव्या तपसे मतिः । न भेतव्यं च भेतव्ये दुःखं नित्यमतो वनम् ॥२४॥
तदलं ते वनं गत्वा क्षेमं नहि वनं तव । विमृशन्निव पश्यामि बहुदोषकरं वनम् ॥२५॥

"The wind blows furiously everyday, thick darkness prevails and hunger (too) is rapacious. Besides there are great perils in the forest. Hence a forest is a source of great hardships. (18) Well-known serpents of various kinds proudly creep on the tracks in large numbers, O proud lady ! A forest, therefore, is a source of great miseries. (19) Serpents having their home in rivers and moving tortuously like rivers lie blocking the way. Hence a forest is full of great suffering. (20) Moths, scorpions, worms and gnats along with mosquitoes harass everyone daily, O frail princess ! Hence a forest is full of suffering. (21) Thorny trees, blades of (the sacred) Kuśa grass and gnarled shrubs known by the name of Kāśas are seen with the ends of their limbs spreading on all sides in the forest, O proud lady ! Hence a forest is thick beset with hardships. (22) Manifold bodily sufferings torment and perils of various kinds threaten a man taking up his abode in a forest dwelling. A forest is (thus) a perennial source of suffering. (23) Anger and greed have to be completely abandoned, one's heart has to be set on asceticism and one must not dread even that which deserves to be dreaded. Hence a forest is a perpetual source of suffering. (24) Therefore have done with the idea of proceeding to the forest. A forest is not secure for you. Bestowing my thought on the subject I perceive the forest as fraught with many evils as it were." (25)

वनं तु नेतुं न कृता मतिर्यदा बभूव रामेण तदा महात्मना ।
न तस्य सीता वचनं चकार तं ततोऽब्रवीद् राममिदं सुदुःखिता ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टाविंशः सर्गः ॥ २८ ॥

When the high-souled Śrī Rāma did not agree to take Sītā to the forest, the latter for her part did not readily accept his verdict. Sore afflicted she then spoke as follows to the illustrious Rāma. (26)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-eight in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

Vaidika Paṅdit Sri V Hariharan Collection, Sholinganallur, Chennai

एकोनत्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXIX

Sītā continues to importune Śrī Rāma to take her to the forest along with him. Śrī Rāma, however, is adamant and goes on consoling her and asking her to stay in Ayodhya.

एतत् तु वचनं श्रुत्वा सीता रामस्य दुःखिता । प्रसक्ताश्रुमुखी मन्दमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
ये त्वया कीर्तिता दोषा वने वस्तव्यतां प्रति । गुणानित्येव तान् विद्धि तव स्नेहपुरस्कृता ॥ २ ॥
मृगाः सिंहा गजाश्चैव शार्दूलाः शरभास्तथा । चमराः सृमराश्चैव ये चान्ये वनचारिणः ॥ ३ ॥
अदृष्टपूर्वरूपत्वात् सर्वे ते तव राघव । रूपं दृष्ट्वापसर्पेयुस्तव सर्वे हि बिभ्यति ॥ ४ ॥
त्वया च सह गन्तव्यं मया गुरुजनाज्ञया । त्वद्वियोगेन मे राम त्यक्तव्यमिह जीवितम् ॥ ५ ॥
नहि मां त्वत्समीपस्थामपि शक्तोऽपि राघव । सुराणामीश्वरः शक्तः प्रधर्षयितुमोजसा ॥ ६ ॥

Distressed to hear this plea of Śrī Rāma, Sītā, for her part, who was deeply attached to the latter, gently spoke as follows, her face wet with tears:—(1) "The disadvantages that have been enumerated by you as accruing from an abode in the forest, know them to be (so many) blessings (in disguise) in view of the fact that I am foremost in your affections. (2) Antelopes, lions and even so elephants, tigers and Śarabhas (a legendary animal with eight legs and said to be more powerful even than the lion), yaks as well as Gayals and many other beasts that roam about in the forest are all sure to run away on seeing your countenance since they have never seen your face before and because all are afraid of you. (3-4) In pursuance of the orders of your parents I too must accompany you (to the forest inasmuch as I am your counterpart* and cannot live apart from you). (Nay) life in this world must be cast away by me in the event of separation from you, O Rāma ! (5) In fact not even Indra, the ruler of gods, is capable of overpowering me by his might so long as I am by your side. (6)

पतिहीना तु या नारी न सा शक्ष्यति जीवितुम् । काममेवंविधं राम त्वया मम निदर्शितम् ॥ ७ ॥
अथापि च महाप्राज्ञ ब्राह्मणानां मया श्रुतम् । पुरा पितृगृहे सत्यं वस्तव्यं किल मे वने ॥ ८ ॥
लक्षणिभ्यो द्विजातिभ्यः श्रुत्वाहं वचनं गृहे । वनवासकृतोत्साहा नित्यमेव महाबल ॥ ९ ॥
आदेशो वनवासस्य प्राप्तव्यः स मया किल । सा त्वया सह भर्त्राहं यास्यामि प्रिय नान्यथा ॥१०॥
कृतादेशा भविष्यामि गमिष्यामि त्वया सह । कालश्चायं समुत्पन्नः सत्यवान् भवतु द्विजः ॥११॥
वनवासे हि जानामि दुःखानि बहुधा किल । प्राप्यन्ते नियतं वीर पुरुषैरकृतात्मभिः ॥१२॥
कन्यया च पितुर्गेहे वनवासः श्रुतो मया । भिक्षिण्याः शमवृत्ताया मम मातुरिहाग्रतः ॥१३॥
प्रसादितश्च वै पूर्वं त्वं मे बहुतिथं प्रभो । गमनं वनवासस्य काङ्क्षितं हि सह त्वया ॥१४॥

Such a thing has been amply brought home to me by you, O Rāma, that a (devoted) wife who stands disunited from her husband should not be able to survive. (7) Moreover, in the days gone by while living at my father's, O highly enlightened prince, the prophecy—which must come out true—

---

* The Śruti says:—अर्धो वा एष आत्मनो यत्पत्नी ।

was heard by me from the mouth of Brahmans (well-versed in astrology) that I must dwell in the forest. (8) Having heard the prophecy at my (parents') home from Brahmans able to interpret marks on the body I have ever cherished a longing for forest life, O highly powerful prince! (9) The truth of that prediction about forest life must be realized by me. I must accordingly accompany you, my husband, O darling; it cannot be otherwise. (10) (I am sure) I shall be permitted by you (to follow you) and shall (eventually) accompany you. Nay, the time (for the fulfilment of the prophecy) has now arrived. Let the utterance of the Brahmans prove true. (11) I certainly know there are sufferings only of various kinds in the forest. They are (however) invariably experienced by men of unsubdued mind (alone), O heroic prince! (12) While I was (still) unmarried, the prediction about my dwelling in the forest was heard by me in my father's house from (the mouth of) a hermitess, spending her life in quietism, in the presence of my mother. Here too, my lord, you have been actually asked on many an occasion in the past the favour of taking me to the forest and spending some time there. Indeed a journey with a view to spending some time in the forest with you is longed for by me. (13-14)

कृतक्षणाहं भद्रं ते गमनं प्रति राघव । वनवासस्य शूरस्य मम चर्या हि रोचते ॥१५॥
शुद्धात्मन् प्रेमभावाद्धि भविष्यामि विकल्मषा । भर्तारमनुगच्छन्ती भर्ता हिं परदैवतम् ॥१६॥
प्रेत्यभावे हि कल्याणः संगमो मे सदा त्वया । श्रुतिर्हि श्रूयते पुण्या ब्राह्मणानां यशस्विनाम् ॥३७॥
इहलोके च पितृभिर्या स्त्री यस्य महाबल । अद्भिर्दत्ता स्वधर्मेण प्रेत्यभावेऽपि तस्य सा ॥१८॥
एवमस्मात् स्वकां नारीं सुवृत्तां हि पतिव्रताम् । नाभिरोचयसे नेतुं त्वं मां केनेह हेतुना ॥१९॥
भक्तां पतिव्रतां दीनां मां समां सुखदुःखयोः । नेतुमर्हसि काकुत्स्थ समानसुखदुःखिनीम् ॥२०॥
यदि मां दुःखितामेवं वनं नेतुं न चेच्छसि । विषमग्निं जलं वाहमास्थास्ये मृत्युकारणात् ॥२१॥

"I am feeling jubilant over (the prospect of) my departure (for the forest). May all be well with you, O scion of Raghu! Service to you, a heroic prince, dwelling in the forest is surely delightful to me. (15) Following my husband (to the forest) with loving devotion I shall surely be absolved from all guilt, O pure-minded prince; for the husband is the supreme deity (for a wife). (16) (On my remaining united with you even in the forest) my union with you will continue for ever and will be a source of blessedness (to both) even hereafter. On this subject, O highly powerful prince, is heard from the lips of celebrated Brahmans the following holy Śruti text:—'Even in the other world a woman continues to be the wife of that very man to whom she was given away in this world by her parents with water in their hands (to solemnize the gift) according to the moral code binding on them.' (17-18) Such being the case, for what reason on earth do you not agree to take me, your own wife, actually (so) devoted to her husband and of (such) good character, from this city? (19) You ought (therefore) to take me, so devoted and faithful to my husband (yourself), miserable, alike to pleasure and pain and sharing your joys and sorrows O scion of Kakutstha! (20) If you do not feel inclined at all to take me, afflicted as I am as shown above, to the forest, I shall resort to poison, fire or water to hasten my end." (21)

एवं बहुविधं तं सा याचते गमनं प्रति । नानुमेने महाबाहुस्तां नेतुं विजनं वनम् ॥२२॥
एवमुक्ता तु सा चिन्तां मैथिली समुपागता । स्नापयन्तीव गामुष्णैरश्रुभिर्नयनच्युतैः ॥२३॥
चिन्तयन्तीं तदा तां तु निवर्तयितुमात्मवान् । क्रोधाविष्टां तु वैदेहीं काकुत्स्थो बह्वसान्त्वयत् ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकोनत्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ २९ ॥

In this way Sītā entreated him in many ways to let her accompany him. (Nevertheless) Śrī Rāma (the mighty-armed prince) did not consent to take her to the forest, which was destitute of friends. (22) Discouraged thus, the celebrated Sītā (the princess of Mithila), for her part, fell a prey to anxiety, moistening the earth as it were with burning tears dropped from her eyes. (23) In order, however, to divert her (from her resolve), the self-possessed Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) for his part then pacified in many ways the said princess of the Videha kingdom, who was overwhelmed with indignation (roused by love) and fell a brooding. (24)

Thus ends Canto Twenty-nine in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXX

Though consoled by Śrī Rāma in many ways, Sītā did not change her mind and seeing her insistent on accompanying him Śrī Rāma agrees to take her to the forest and asks her to prepare for the journey and to give away all her personal property to the Brahmans.

सान्त्व्यमाना तु रामेण मैथिली जनकात्मजा । वनवासनिमित्तार्थं भर्तारमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
सा तमुत्तमसंविग्ना सीता विपुलवक्षसम् । प्रणयाच्चाभिमानाच्च परिचिक्षेप राघवम् ॥ २ ॥
किं त्वामन्यत वैदेहः पिता मे मिथिलाधिपः । राम जामातरं प्राप्य स्त्रियं पुरुषविग्रहम् ॥ ३ ॥
अनृतं बत लोकोऽयमज्ञानाद् यदि वक्ष्यति । तेजो नास्ति परं रामे तपतीव दिवाकरे ॥ ४ ॥
किं हि कृत्वा विषण्णस्त्वं कुतो वा भयमस्ति ते । यत् परित्यक्तुकामस्त्वं मामनन्यपरायणाम् ॥ ५ ॥
द्युमत्सेनसुतं वीरं सत्यवन्तमनुव्रताम् । सावित्रीमिव मां विद्धि त्वमात्मवशवर्तिनीम् ॥ ६ ॥
न त्वहं मनसाप्यन्यं द्रष्टास्मि त्वदृतेऽनघ । त्वया राघव गच्छेयं यथान्या कुलपांसनी ॥ ७ ॥
स्वयं तु भार्यां कौमारीं चिरमध्युषितां सतीम् । शैलूष इव मां राम परेभ्यो दातुमिच्छसि ॥ ८ ॥

Being consoled by Śrī Rāma, Sītā (Janaka's daughter), the princess of Mithila, for her part, replied thus to her husband in order to obtain his permission to live (with him) in the forest. (1) Highly agitated (at the thought of her separation from Śrī Rāma), the said Sītā taunted Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who was distinguished by a broad chest, from affection and pride in the following words:— (2) "Securing you as his son-in-law, O Rāma, did my father, Janaka (descended in the line of the Videhas), the king of Mithila, recognise you to be a woman in the form of a man? (3)

It would be a matter for pity (to me) if (in the event of your not taking me with you) the people of Ayodhya utter through ignorance the falsehood that 'Supreme valour is lacking in Śrī Rāma, even though he blazes like the sun.' (4) On what ground are you cast down or whence the fear in you for which you are inclined to desert me, exclusively devoted as I am (to you)? (5) Know me you to be as obedient to your will as Sāvitrī (of historical fame) was devoted to the valiant Satyavān, son of King Dyumatsena. (6) I will not cast my eyes even in thought on anyone else than you as any other woman bringing disgrace to her family would, O sinless one! I must accompany you, O scion of Raghu! (7) How do you, like a man who lives by his wife, intend to deliver to others of your own will me, your chaste wife, who was married to you before puberty and has lived with you for a long time, O Rāma? (8)

यस्य पथ्यंचरामात्थ यस्य चार्थेऽवरुध्यसे । त्वं तस्य भव वश्यश्च विधेयश्च सदानघ ॥ ९ ॥
स मामनादाय वनं न त्वं प्रस्थितुमर्हसि । तपो वा यदि वारण्यं स्वर्गो वा स्यात् त्वया सह ॥१०॥
न च मे भविता तत्र कश्चित् पथि परिश्रमः । पृष्ठतस्तव गच्छन्त्या विहारशयनेष्विव ॥११॥
कुशकाशशरेषीका ये च कण्टकिनो द्रुमाः । तूलाजिनसमस्पर्शा मार्गे मम सह त्वया ॥१२॥
महावातसमुद्धूतं यन्मामवकरिष्यति । रजो रमण तन्मन्ये परार्ध्यमिव चन्दनम् ॥१३॥
शाद्वलेषु यदा शिश्ये वनान्तर्वनगोचरा । कुथास्तरणयुक्तेषु किं स्यात् सुखतरं ततः ॥१४॥
पत्रं मूलं फलं यत्तु अल्पं वा यदि वा बहु । दास्यसे स्वयमाहृत्य तन्मेऽमृतरसोपमम् ॥१५॥
न मातुर्न पितुस्तत्र स्मरिष्यामि न वेश्मनः । आर्तवान्युपभुञ्जाना पुष्पाणि च फलानि च ॥१६॥
न च तत्र ततः किंचिद् द्रष्टुमर्हसि विप्रियम् । मत्कृते न च ते शोको न भविष्यामि दुर्भरा ॥१७॥

"Be you ever amenable to the control of and obedient to him whom you ask me to follow the wishes of, and for whose sake you are being pushed back. (9) Such as you are, you ought not to proceed to the forest without taking me (with you). Be it a course of austerities, forest life or heavenly life, let it be with you. (10) No more exertion will be caused to me in following at your heels on the paths in the forest than in strolling (in a garden) or in sleep. (11) Blades of the sacred Kuśa grass, shrubs known by the name of Kāśa, reeds and rushes and whatever prickly bushes fall in my way in your company will touch my soles like a heap of cotton or soft deerskin. (12) I shall reckon the dust raised by a storm that will cover my body as most exquisite sandal dust, my lord! (13) When, while living in the forest, I shall lie down on turfs in the heart of a forest (with you), will lying in beds covered with carpets be more comfortable than that? (14) Anything you will give (me) in the shape of leaves, roots or fruits, bringing it yourself in a small or large quantity will taste like nectar to me. (15) Enjoying there seasonal flowers and fruits too I shall neither remember my mother nor father nor home. (16) You ought not to foresee anything unwelcome following from my departure to the forest. Nor will (any) grief come to you on my account there nor shall I prove hard to sustain. (17)

यस्त्वया सह स स्वर्गो निरयो यस्त्वया विना । इति जानन् परां प्रीतिं गच्छ राम मया सह ॥१८॥
अथ मामेवमव्यग्रां वनं नैव नयिष्यसे । विषमद्यैव पास्यामि मा वशं द्विषतां गमम् ॥१९॥
पश्चादपि हि दुःखेन मम नैवास्ति जीवितम् । उज्झितायास्त्वया नाथ तदैव मरणं वरम् ॥२०॥
इमं हि सहितुं शोकं मुहूर्तमपि नोत्सहे । किं पुनर्दश वर्षाणि त्रीणि चैकं च दुःखिता ॥२१॥

इति सा शोकसंतप्ता विलप्य करुणं बहु । चुक्रोश पतिमायस्ता भृशमालिङ्ग्य सस्वरम् ॥२२॥
सा विद्धा बहुभिर्वाक्यैर्दिग्धैरिव गजाङ्गना । चिरसंनियतं बाष्पं मुमोचाग्निमिवारणिः ॥२३॥
तस्याः स्फटिकसंकाशं वारि संतापसम्भवम् । नेत्राभ्यां परिसुस्राव पङ्कजाभ्यामिवोदकम् ॥२४॥
तत् सितामलचन्द्राभं मुखमायतलोचनम् । पर्यशुष्यत बाष्पेण जलोद्धृतमिवाम्बुजम् ॥२५॥
तां परिष्वज्य बाहुभ्यां विसंज्ञामिव दुःखिताम् । उवाच वचनं रामः परिविश्वासयंस्तदा ॥२६॥

An abode which will be shared (by me) with you will be (pleasing as) heaven (to me); while that which will be shorn of you will be (repellent as) hell. Knowing thus my supreme love (for you) proceed (to the forest) with me, O Rāma! (18) If you definitely do not take me to the forest, even though I am not (the least) afraid (of going there) as shown above, I shall drink poison this very day but would on no account submit to the will of enemies (Bharata and others). (19) Surely as a result of agony (caused by separation from you) I am not going to live even afterwards when abandoned by you, O lord! It is therefore better that I should die in your very presence. (20) I indeed cannot endure even for less than an hour the grief caused by separation from you. How, then, can I, an afflicted woman, bear it for ten years and four ?" (21) Having wailed a lot in a piteous way as aforesaid, and closely embracing her husband, tormented as she was with grief, Sītā, who (now) felt exhausted, cried at the top of her voice. (22) Tortured with many homilies like a female elephant pierced with poisoned shafts, she shed tears that had long been restrained even as a piece of wood would emit fire (through attrition with another). (23) Tear-drops sparkling as crystal and born of agony slipped from her eyes as water from a pair of lotuses. (24) Her countenance, that shone like the uneclipsed moon on a full moon night and was distinguished by big eyes, was blasted with (hot) tears as a lotus taken out of water is withered through heat. (25) Folding in his arms Sītā, who felt distressed and had fainted as it were, Śrī Rāma then spoke to her as follows, fully reassuring her:—(26)

न देवि बत दुःखेन स्वर्गमप्यभिरोचये । नहि मेऽस्ति भयं किंचित् स्वयम्भोरिव सर्वतः ॥२७॥
तव सर्वमभिप्रायमविज्ञाय शुभानने । वासं न रोचयेऽरण्ये शक्तिमानपि रक्षणे ॥२८॥
यत् सृष्टासि मया सार्धं वनवासाय मैथिलि । न विहातुं मया शक्या प्रीतिरात्मवता यथा ॥२९॥
धर्मस्तु गजनासोरु सद्भिराचरितः पुरा । तं चाहमनुवर्तिष्ये यथा सूर्यं सुवर्चला ॥३०॥
न खल्वहं न गच्छेयं वनं जनकनन्दिनि । वचनं तन्नयति मां पितुः सत्योपबृंहितम् ॥३१॥
एष धर्मश्च सुश्रोणि पितुर्मातुश्च वश्यता । आज्ञां चाहं व्यतिक्रम्य नाहं जीवितुमुत्सहे ॥३२॥
अस्वाधीनं कथं दैवं प्रकारैरभिराध्यते । स्वाधीनं समतिक्रम्य मातरं पितरं गुरुम् ॥३३॥
यत्र त्रयं त्रयो लोकाः पवित्रं तत्समं भुवि । नान्यदस्ति शुभापाङ्गे तेनेदमभिराध्यते ॥३४॥

"Alas, I find no delight even in heaven obtained by causing agony to you, O pious lady! Nor is there fear to me from any quarter any more than to Lord Nārāyaṇa. (27) Not knowing your full mind, O lady with a charming countenance, I did not approve of your sojourn in the forest, though capable of protecting you. (28) Since you were (obviously) born to dwell with me in the forest, O princess of Mithila, you are incapable of being abandoned by me even as compassion cannot be given up by a man of self-knowledge. (29) Nay, I shall abide by the moral law actually followed by the virtuous (dwellers in the forest) in the past, O lady with comely limbs! Follow me (now even) as Suvarchalā (nicknamed Saṃjñā, wife of the sun-god) does the sun-god. (30) Of course it cannot be that I may not proceed to the forest, O daughter of Janaka; (for) that plighted word of my father is urging me (to proceed to the forest). (31) Nay, obedience to one's father and mother—this is one's sacred duty, O handsome lady! And violating their command I dare not survive. (32) Disregarding one's mother, father and teacher, whose command can be directly obtained, how can it be possible to propitiate one's chosen deity, who is not so manifest, through (traditional) modes of worship? (33) No other worship is so sacred (or capable of delivering the worshipper from the great fear of transmigration) on earth as service to the aforesaid three, through which all the three worlds (heaven, earth and the space intervening them) can be propitiated and (all) the three objects of human pursuit (*viz*, religious merit, earthly possessions and gratification of senses) can be obtained, O lady with charming glances! Hence the above-mentioned three are sought to be propitiated (by me). (34)

न सत्यं दानमानौ वा यज्ञो वाप्याप्तदक्षिणः । तथा बलकराः सीते यथा सेवा पितुर्मता ॥३५॥
स्वर्गो धनं वा धान्यं वा विद्या पुत्राः सुखानि च । गुरुवृत्त्यनुरोधेन न किंचिदपि दुर्लभम् ॥३६॥
देवगन्धर्वगोलोकान् ब्रह्मलोकांस्तथापरान् । प्राप्नुवन्ति महात्मानो मातापितृपरायणाः ॥३७॥
स मां पिता यथा शास्ति सत्यधर्मपथे स्थितः । तथा वर्तितुमिच्छामि स हि धर्मः सनातनः ॥३८॥
मम सन्ना मतिः सीते नेतुं त्वां दण्डकावनम् । वसिष्यामीति सा त्वं मामनुयातुं सुनिश्चिता ॥३९॥
सा हि दिष्टानवद्याङ्गि वनाय मदिरेक्षणे । अनुगच्छस्व मां भीरु सहधर्मचरी भव ॥४०॥

"Neither truthfulness nor gifts and honour (bestowed on the deserving) nor sacrificial performances in which sacrificial fees are handsomely paid are so potent (in securing happiness in the other world) as service to one's father (and mother) is believed to be. (35) Heavenly bliss or (earthly) riches, foodgrains or learning, sons and amenities of life—nothing is hard to obtain through compliance with the wishes of one's elders. (36) High-souled men (exclusively) devoted to (the service of) their parents secure (after their death) the regions of the gods and the Gandharvas, the seventh heaven presided over by Brahmā (the creator) and other regions, nay, (even) Goloka (the highest heaven presided over by Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, so-called because it abounds in cows, the pets of Śrī Kṛṣṇa). (37) I wish to do precisely as my celebrated father, devoted to the path of truthfulness and virtue, enjoins me to do; for such is the eternal law of morality. (38) Inasmuch as you are fully determined to follow me (to the forest) with a resolution to sojourn (there), my (former) decision about (not) taking you to the forest of Daṇḍaka has grown weak, O Sītā! (39) Since you are (now) allowed (by me) to proceed to the forest (with me), O timid lady with flawless limbs and bewitching eyes, follow me as such and be my partner in the practice of asceticism (incumbent on the dwellers in a forest). (40)

सर्वथा सदृशं सीते मम स्वस्य कुलस्य च । व्यवसायमनुक्रान्ता कान्ते त्वमतिशोभनम् ॥४१॥
आरभस्व शुभश्रोणि वनवासक्षमाः क्रियाः । नेदानीं त्वदृते सीते स्वर्गोऽपि मम रोचते ॥४२॥
ब्राह्मणेभ्यश्च रत्नानि भिक्षुकेभ्यश्च भोजनम् । देहि चाशंसमानेभ्यः संत्वरस्व च मा चिरम् ॥४३॥
भूषणानि महार्हाणि वरवस्त्राणि यानि च । रमणीयाश्च ये केचित् क्रीडार्थाश्चाप्युपस्कराः ॥४४॥

शयनीयानि यानानि मम चान्यानि यानि च । देहि स्वभृत्यवर्गस्य ब्राह्मणानामनन्तरम् ॥४५॥
अनुकूलं तु सा भर्तुर्ज्ञात्वा गमनमात्मनः । क्षिप्रं प्रमुदिता देवी दातुमेव प्रचक्रमे ॥४६॥
ततः प्रहृष्टा प्रतिपूर्णमानसा यशस्विनी भर्तुरवेक्ष्य भाषितम् ।
धनानि रत्नानि च दातुमङ्गना प्रचक्रमे धर्मभृतां मनस्विनी ॥४७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३० ॥

"Beloved Sītā, you have arrived at a most welcome decision worthy in every way of my race as well as of yours. (41) Proceed with the duties preliminary to a sojourn in the woods, O lady with charming limbs! Without you even heaven does not catch my fancy at this moment. (42) Nay, bestow valuable gifts on the Brahmans and also offer food to mendicants asking for it. Again, be very quick. Make no delay. (43) Give to the various grades of your dependants whatever costly ornaments, fine articles of wearing apparel and whatever lovely articles of household use and those meant for diversion, couches and conveyances, (both) mine as well as yours, and whatever articles are left after satisfying the Brahmans." (44-45) Overjoyed to know her departure (to the forest) acceptable to her husband, the godly lady (Sītā) for her part quickly and definitely set about making gifts accordingly. (46) Feeling reassured in mind and overjoyed to ponder over the speech of her husband, the illustrious and strong-minded lady forthwith commenced gifting riches and jewels to virtuous souls. (47)

Thus ends Canto Thirty in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकत्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXI

Hearing the dialogue of Śrī Rāma and Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa seeks his permission to accompany him to the forest. Śrī Rāma desires him to stay in Ayodhya in order to look after his mothers. But seeing his insistence, he agrees to take him as well and urges him to bring Suyajña and other Ṛṣis accounting them worthy of receiving gifts from him.

एवं श्रुत्वा स संवादं लक्ष्मणः पूर्वमागतः । बाष्पपर्याकुलमुखः शोकं सोढुमशक्नुवन् ॥ १ ॥
स भ्रातुश्चरणौ गाढं निपीड्य रघुनन्दनः । सीतामुवाचातियशां राघवं च महाव्रतम् ॥ २ ॥
यदि गन्तुं कृता बुद्धिर्वनं मृगगजायुतम् । अहं त्वानुगमिष्यामि वनमग्रे धनुर्धरः ॥ ३ ॥
मया समेतोऽरण्यानि रम्याणि विचरिष्यसि । पक्षिभिर्मृगयूथैश्च संघुष्टानि समन्ततः ॥ ४ ॥
न देवलोकाक्रमणं नामरत्वमहं वृणे । ऐश्वर्यं चापि लोकानां कामये न त्वया विना ॥ ५ ॥
एवं ब्रुवाणः सौमित्रिर्वनवासाय निश्चितः । रामेण बहुभिः सान्त्वैर्निषिद्धः पुनरब्रवीत् ॥ ६ ॥
अनुज्ञातस्तु भवता पूर्वमेव यदस्म्यहम् । किमिदानीं पुनरपि क्रियते मे निवारणम् ॥ ७ ॥

यदर्थं प्रतिषेधो मे क्रियते गन्तुमिच्छतः । एतदिच्छामि विज्ञातुं संशयो हि ममानघ ॥ ८ ॥
ततोऽब्रवीन्महातेजा रामो लक्ष्मणमग्रतः । स्थितं प्राग्गामिनं धीरं याचमानं कृताञ्जलिम् ॥ ९ ॥

Hearing the dialogue (that passed between Śrī Rāma and Sītā) as reproduced above, the illustrious Lakṣmaṇa, who had already reached there (from Kausalyā's apartments along with Śrī Rāma) could not bear the grief (born of his impending separation from Śrī Rāma), his face covered with tears. (1) Tightly pressing the feet of his (eldest) brother, Lakṣmaṇa, the delight of the Raghus, spoke (as follows) to Sītā, who enjoyed great celebrity, as also to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who had under-taken a great vow :—(2) "If your mind is set on proceeding to the forest, full of deer and elephants I shall accompany you to the woodland, walking ahead of you armed with a bow. (3) Accompanied by me you will roam about in delightful woodlands rendered noisy all round by birds and swarms of deer. (4) Without you I do not wish to ascend to heaven nor do I solicit godhood nor again do I crave for the rulership of the spheres." (5) Speaking thus, Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), who was determined to dwell in the forest (with his eldest brother) and was discouraged by Śrī Rāma in (so) many soothing words, submitted once more (as follows) :—(6) "Even though I stand already permitted by you (to accompany you to the forest), how am I being prohibited anew this moment ? (7) I wish to know definitely wherefore I am being disallowed though longing to proceed (with you); for there is doubt in my mind, O sinless brother (as to how permission was granted in the beginning and is being withheld now)." (8) Śrī Rāma, who was endowed with great energy, then replied (as follows) to the strong-minded Lakṣmaṇa, who stood before him eager to precede Śrī Rāma (to the forest) and soliciting the latter's permission with joined palms :—(9)

स्निग्धो धर्मरतो धीरः सततं सत्पथे स्थितः । प्रियः प्राणसमो वश्यो विजेयश्च सखा च मे ॥१०॥
मयाद्य सह सौमित्रे त्वयि गच्छति तद्वनम् । को भजिष्यति कौसल्यां सुमित्रां वा यशस्विनीम् ॥११॥
अभिवर्षति कामैर्यः पर्जन्यः पृथिवीमिव । स कामपाशपर्यस्तो महातेजा महीपतिः ॥१२॥
सा हि राज्यमिदं प्राप्य नृपस्याश्वपतेः सुता । दुःखितानां सपत्नीनां न करिष्यति शोभनम् ॥१३॥
न भरिष्यति कौसल्यां सुमित्रां च सुदुःखिताम् । भरतो राज्यमासाद्य कैकेय्यां पर्यवस्थितः ॥१४॥
तामार्यां स्वयमेवेह राजानुग्रहणेन वा । सौमित्रे भर कौसल्यामुक्तमर्थममुं चर ॥१५॥
एवं मयि च ते भक्तिर्भविष्यति सुदर्शिता । धर्मज्ञगुरुपूजायां धर्मश्चाप्यतुलो महान् ॥१६॥
एवं कुरुष्व सौमित्रे मत्कृते रघुनन्दन । अस्माभिर्विप्रहीणाया मातुर्नो न भवेत् सुखम् ॥१७॥
एवमुक्तस्तु रामेण लक्ष्मणः श्लक्ष्णया गिरा । प्रत्युवाच तदा रामं वाक्यज्ञो वाक्यकोविदम् ॥१८॥

"Full of affection (for me), devoted to virtue, resolute, constantly firm on the right path (as shown by the Vedas), dear to me as life, amenable to my control and obedient, you are my boon companion too (and therefore worthy in every way of accompanying me). (10) (Yet) if you proceed with me to the forest for which I am leaving today, O son of Sumitrā, who will serve the illustrious Kausalyā and Sumitrā ? (11) That highly glorious king (our father) who showered blessings on the people (even) as the god of rain sends down rain on the earth stands fettered by the cord of love. (12) Obtaining this kingdom Kaikeyī, the daughter of King Aśwapati, will certainly not accord good treatment to her afflicted co-wives. (13) Having attained sovereignty Bharata (too) will not maintain the extremely miserable Kausalyā and Sumitrā, devoted as he will (naturally) be to Kaikeyī (his own mother). (14) By your own effort or by securing the goodwill of the king, O son of Sumitrā, please look after here the aforesaid Kausalyā, who is worthy of the utmost respect. (Pray) carry out this aforesaid design (of mine). (15) On service being thus rendered to elders, O knower of what is right, devotion to me will have been fully demonstrated by you and incomparably great religious merit too will accrue to you. (16) For my sake (therefore), O son of Sumitrā, do as aforesaid; (for) there will be no happiness for my mother bereft of us, O scion of Raghu !" (17) Spoken to thus by Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, for his part, who knew how to speak, then replied in sweet words (as follows) to his eldest brother, a master of expression (himself) :—(18)

तवैव तेजसा वीर भरतः पूजयिष्यति । कौसल्यां च सुमित्रां च प्रयतो नास्ति संशयः ॥१९॥
यदि दुःस्थो न रक्षेत भरतो राज्यमुत्तमम् । प्राप्य दुर्मनसा वीर गर्वेण च विशेषतः ॥२०॥
तमहं दुर्मतिं क्रूरं वधिष्यामि न संशयः । तत्पक्षानपि तान् सर्वांस्त्रैलोक्यमपि किंतु सा ॥२१॥
कौसल्या बिभृयादार्या सहस्रं मद्विधानपि । यस्याः सहस्रं ग्रामाणां सम्प्राप्तमुपजीविनाम् ॥२२॥
तदात्मभरणे चैव मम मातुस्तथैव च । पर्याप्ता मद्विधानां च भरणाय मनस्विनी ॥२३॥
कुरुष्व मामनुचरं वैधर्म्यं नेह विद्यते । कृतार्थोऽहं भविष्यामि तव चार्थः प्रकल्प्यते ॥२४॥
धनुरादाय सगुणं खनित्रपिटकाधरः । अग्रतस्ते गमिष्यामि पन्थानं तव दर्शयन् ॥२५॥
आहरिष्यामि ते नित्यं मूलानि च फलानि च । वन्यानि च तथान्यानि स्वाहार्हाणि तपस्विनाम् ॥२६॥
भवांस्तु सह वैदेह्या गिरिसानुषु रंस्यसे । अहं सर्वं करिष्यामि जाग्रतः स्वपतश्च ते ॥२७॥

"Inspired by your moral lustre itself the devout Bharata will treat with respect Kausalya and Sumitrā too : there is no doubt (about it). O valiant prince ! (19) If led astray in consequence of having obtained this first-rate kingdom, Bharata does not protect his mothers through perversity and particularly from pride, O heroic brother, I shall make short work not only of that evil-minded and cruel fellow but all his well-known adherents too, nay, all the three worlds (if they side with him); there is no doubt about it. But the celebrated Kausalyā, who is worthy of the highest respect and (even) by whose dependants thousands of villages have been duly obtained (as grants), can support thousands like me. (20—22) As such the high-minded Kausalyā is capable of maintaining herself as well as myself and even so my mother (Sumitrā) and those like me. (23) Therefore kindly make me your attendant : there will be no unrighteousness in it. I shall (thereby) have accomplished my object and your purpose too will be adequately served. (24) Taking my stringed bow and carrying a spade and a basket I shall walk ahead of you showing you the way. (25) Nay, I shall procure for you from day to day wild roots and fruits and other products as well fit for being consigned as oblations into the sacred fire. (26) You will sport at will with Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan) on mountain-tops. I shall do everything for you whether you are waking or sleeping." (27)

रामस्त्वनेन वाक्येन सुप्रीतः प्रत्युवाच तम् । व्रजापृच्छस्व सौमित्रे सर्वमेव सुहृज्जनम् ॥२८॥
ये च राज्ञो ददौ दिव्ये महात्मा वरुणः स्वयम् । जनकस्य महायज्ञे धनुषी रौद्रदर्शने ॥२९॥
अभेद्ये कवचे दिव्ये तूणी चाक्षय्यसायकौ । आदित्यविमलाभौ द्वौ खड्गौ हेमपरिष्कृतौ ॥३०॥
सत्कृत्य निहितं सर्वमेतदाचार्यसद्मनि । सर्वमायुधमादाय क्षिप्रमाव्रज लक्ष्मण ॥३१॥
स सुहृज्जनमामन्त्र्य वनवासाय निश्चितः । इक्ष्वाकुगुरुमागम्य जग्राहायुधमुत्तमम् ॥३२॥
तद् दिव्यं राजशार्दूलः सत्कृतं माल्यभूषितम् । रामाय दर्शयामास सौमित्रिः सर्वमायुधम् ॥३३॥
तमुवाचात्मवान् रामः प्रीत्या लक्ष्मणमागतम् । काले त्वमागतः सौम्य काङ्क्षिते मम लक्ष्मण ॥३४॥
अहं प्रदातुमिच्छामि यदिदं मामकं धनम् । ब्राह्मणेभ्यस्तपस्विभ्यस्त्वया सह परंतप ॥३५॥
वसन्तीह दृढं भक्त्या गुरुषु द्विजसत्तमाः । तेषामपि च मे भूयः सर्वेषां चोपजीविनाम् ॥३६॥
वसिष्ठपुत्रं तु सुयज्ञमार्यं त्वमानयाशु प्रवरं द्विजानाम् ।
अपि प्रयास्यामि वनं समस्तानभ्यर्च्य शिष्टानपरान् द्विजातीन् ॥३७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकत्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३१ ॥

Highly pleased at this submission Śrī Rāma for his part replied (as follows) to Lakṣmaṇa:—"Go, take leave (to proceed to the forest), O son of Sumitrā, of all your near and dear ones. (28) Nay, the two heavenly bows, dreadful to look at, which the high-souled Varuṇa (the god of water) personally gave to King Janaka at a grand sacrifice (performed by the latter), a pair of impenetrable pieces of armour, a couple of quivers containing an inexhaustible stock of arrows and a pair of swords shedding a spotless lustre like that of the sun and decked with gold—all these (which had been presented to me by King Janaka as part of my dowry) lie deposited after paying (due) reverence at the residence of our preceptor (Sage Vasiṣṭha). Taking all those arms return soon, O Lakṣmaṇa!" (29-31) Taking leave of his near and dear ones and approaching Vasiṣṭha (the preceptor of the Ikṣwākus), the prince, who was now assured of his sojourn in the forest, took (all) the excellent arms etc. (32) Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), a tiger among princes, showed to Śrī Rāma all the aforesaid weapons, that were adored as divine and stood decorated with garlands. (33) To Lakṣmaṇa, who had come back, Śrī Rāma, who had (fully) brought his mind under control, lovingly said, "You have returned at the hour desired by me, O gentle Lakṣmaṇa! (34) With you, O chastiser of foes, I wish to give away whatever wealth of my own there is (with me) to Brahmans engaged in austerities as also to those jewels among Brahmans, who are firmly devoted to their preceptors and live here (in my palace) and again to all my dependants (too). (35-36) Meanwhile bring you speedily the most adorable Suyajña, son of Vasiṣṭha and the foremost among the Brahmans, as also other cultured Brahmans. Fully adoring (them) all I shall (forthwith) proceed to the forest." (37)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-one in the Ayodhya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्वात्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXII

Having received gifts of jewels and ornaments from Śrī Rāma and Sītā, Suyajña invokes divine blessings on the couple. Enjoined by Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa then bestows silk costumes and ornaments etc. on the sons of Sage Agastya and others. Urged by his wife, a sage, Trijaṭa by name, approaches Śrī Rāma and seeks riches from him. Śrī Rāma thereupon bestows on him thousands of cows and distributes his remaining wealth among other Brahmans as well as among his relations and dependants.

ततः शासनमाज्ञाय भ्रातुः प्रियकरं हितम् । गत्वा स प्रविवेशाशु सुयज्ञस्य निवेशनम् ॥ १ ॥
तं विप्रमग्न्यगारस्थं वन्दित्वा लक्ष्मणोऽब्रवीत् । सखेऽभ्यागच्छ पश्य त्वं वेश्म दुष्करकारिणः ॥ २ ॥
ततः संध्यामुपास्थाय गत्वा सौमित्रिणा सह । ऋद्धं स प्राविशल्लक्ष्म्या रम्यं रामनिवेशनम् ॥ ३ ॥
तमागतं वेदविदं प्राञ्जलिः सीतया सह । सुयज्ञमभिचक्राम राघवोऽग्निमिवार्चितम् ॥ ४ ॥
जातरूपमयैर्मुख्यैरङ्गदैः कुण्डलैः शुभैः । सहेमसूत्रैर्मणिभिः केयूरैर्वलयैरपि ॥ ५ ॥
अन्यैश्च रत्नैर्बहुभिः काकुत्स्थः प्रत्यपूजयत् । सुयज्ञं स तदोवाच रामः सीताप्रचोदितः ॥ ६ ॥
हारं च हेमसूत्रं च भार्यायै सौम्य हारय । रशनां चाथ सा सीता दातुमिच्छति ते सखी ॥ ७ ॥
अङ्गदानि च चित्राणि केयूराणि शुभानि च । प्रयच्छति सखी तुभ्यं भार्यायै गच्छती वनम् ॥ ८ ॥
पर्यङ्कमग्र्यास्तरणं नानारत्नविभूषितम् । तमपीच्छति वैदेही प्रतिष्ठापयितुं त्वयि ॥ ९ ॥
नागः शत्रुंजयो नाम मातुलोऽयं ददौ मम । तं ते निष्कसहस्रेण ददामि द्विजपुंगव ॥१०॥
इत्युक्तः स तु रामेण सुयज्ञः प्रतिगृह्य तत् । रामलक्ष्मणसीतानां प्रयुयोजाशिषः शिवाः ॥११॥

Bowing to the delightful and salutary command of his (eldest) brother (the execution of which involved substantial service to deserving Brahmans) and departing Lakṣmaṇa speedily entered the house of Suyajña. (1) Saluting the said Brahman, who was present in the fire-sanctuary, he said, "O friend, visit you the palace of Śrī Rāma (who is going to do something hard to accomplish) and witness his doing (with your own eyes). (2) Concluding forthwith his periodical fire-worship (for midday) and proceeding with Lakṣmaṇa, he entered (in no time) the lovely palace of Śrī Rāma, overflowing with wealth (of every kind). (3) Seeing him arrived, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) rose from his seat with joined palms along with Sītā to receive Suyajña, a knower of the Vedas, (even) as one would welcome a flame offered worship (in the form of oblations). (4) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) gratified Suyajña with (presents of) excellent Angadas (armlets) and beautiful ear-rings of gold, gems strung on gold threads as also with Keyūras (another ornament similar in shape to an Angada but worn above it near the arm-pit) and bracelets as well as with many other super-excellent ornaments. Urged by Sītā, the said Rāma then spoke to

Suyajña (as follows):—(5—6) "The illustrious Sītā, your wife's friend, wishes to bestow a pearl necklace as well as a string of gold and also a girdle on your wife, O gentle sage! (Please) cause them to be conveyed to her. (7) Leaving for the forest (with me this very day) the friend of your wife offers to you for (the use of) your wife Angadas adorned with figures cut in it and beautiful Keyūras too. (8) Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan) also intends to have sent to your house (as a gift) a well-known couch inlaid with various jewels and provided with a first-class coverlet. (9) I gift to you along with a thousand gold coins, the elephant, Śatruñjaya by name, which my maternal uncle gave as a present to me, O jewel among the Brahmans!" (10) Accepting the gift, when requested as aforesaid by Śrī Rāma, the celebrated Suyajña for his part pronounced benign blessings on Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā. (11)

अथ भ्रातरमव्यग्रं प्रियं रामः प्रियंवदम् । सौमित्रिं तमुवाचेदं ब्रह्मेव त्रिदशेश्वरम् ॥१२॥
अगस्त्यं कौशिकं चैव ताबुभौ ब्राह्मणोत्तमौ । अर्चयाहूय सौमित्रे रत्नैः सस्यमिवाम्बुभिः ॥१३॥
तर्पयस्व महाबाहो गोसहस्रेण राघव । सुवर्णरजतैश्चैव मणिभिश्च महाधनैः ॥१४॥
कौसल्यां च य आशीर्भिर्भक्तः पर्युपतिष्ठति । आचार्यस्तैत्तिरीयाणामभिरूपश्च वेदवित् ॥१५॥
तस्य यानं च दासीश्च सौमित्रे सम्प्रदापय । कौशेयानि च वस्त्राणि यावत् तुष्यति स द्विजः ॥१६॥
सूतश्चित्ररथश्चार्यः सचिवः सुचिरोषितः । तोषयैनं महार्हैश्च रत्नैर्वस्त्रैर्धनैस्तथा ॥१७॥
पशुकाभिश्च सर्वाभिर्गवां दशशतेन च । ये चेमे कठकालापा बहवो दण्डमाणवाः ॥१८॥
नित्यस्वाध्यायशीलत्वान्नान्यत् कुर्वन्ति किंचन । अलसाः स्वादुकामाश्च महतां चापि सम्मताः ॥१९॥
तेषामशीतियानानि रत्नपूर्णानि दापय । शालिवाहसहस्रं च द्वे शते भद्रकांस्तथा ॥२०॥
व्यञ्जनार्थं च सौमित्रे गोसहस्रमुपाकुरु ।
मेखलीनां महासङ्घः कौसल्यां समुपस्थितः । तेषां सहस्रं सौमित्रे प्रत्येकं सम्प्रदापय ॥२१॥
अम्बा यथा नो नन्देच्च कौसल्या मम दक्षिणाम् । तथा द्विजातींस्तान् सर्वाल्लँक्ष्मणार्चय सर्वशः ॥२२॥

As Brahmā (the creator) would address Indra (the ruler of gods), Śrī Rāma then spoke as follows to his celebrated and beloved brother, Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), who was polite of speech and stood unperturbed (by his side):—(12) "Calling Agastya (a son of the sage Agastya) and Kauśika (a son of Viśwāmitra), both of whom are foremost among the Brahmans, O son of Sumitrā, honour them by offering valuable gifts (to them) and (then) satiate them with (presents of) a thousand cows (each) as well as with gold and silver pieces and costly gems (even) as a cloud would drench the earth with showers, O scion of Raghu! (13-14) Further see that to the Brahman who waits upon Kausalyā with benedictions (every day), devoted as he is to her, nay, who is a teacher of those studying the Taittirīya recension of the Black Yajurveda, is a knower of all the Vedas and (as such) worthy (in every way), O son of Sumitrā, are duly gifted a conveyance and servant-maids and silken robes and as much wealth as that Brahman may feel satisfied with. (15-16) There is the venerable Chitraratha, a charioteer *cum* minister of very long standing. Gratify him with (presents of) costly jewels, articles of wearing apparel and riches and even so with animals of all kinds (such as female goats and buffaloes) and a thousand cows. Besides, here are many religious students carrying staffs (as a distinguishing mark of celibacy) and studying the Kaṭha and Kalāpa recensions of the Vedas, who, being ever engaged in the study of the Vedas, do not practise any other austerities (in the shape of fasting etc.) but are (nevertheless) held in great esteem even by the great (for their devotion to study), are inactive (in the sense that they do not move out for begging alms) and (yet) hanker for delicacies. (17—19) Cause them to be given eighty camels loaded with jewels, a thousand bullocks carrying loads of rice and even so two hundred bullocks useful for cultivation. (20) Gift a thousand cows more (to Brahmans maintaining the sacred fire) for yielding milk products (curds and ghee etc. used for adding flavour to food), O Lakṣmaṇa! A large multitude of celibates (willing to marry on the impending expiry of their vow of celibacy) waits upon Kausalyā (my mother): see that they are given a thousand cows or gold coins each (so as to enable them to pay the preceptor's fee and defray the nuptial expenses), O son of Sumitrā! (21) Nay, honour all the aforesaid Brahmans in every way so liberally that our mother, Kausalyā, may rejoice to see my gift (to the celibates depending on her), O Lakṣmaṇa"! (22)

ततः पुरुषशार्दूलस्तद् धनं लक्ष्मणः स्वयम् । यथोक्तं ब्राह्मणेन्द्राणामददाद् धनदो यथा ॥२३॥
अथाब्रवीद् बाष्पगलांस्तिष्ठतश्चोपजीविनः । स प्रदाय बहुद्रव्यमेकैकस्योपजीवनम् ॥२४॥
लक्ष्मणस्य च यद् वेश्म गृहं च यदिदं मम । अशून्यं कार्यमेकैकं यावदागमनं मम ॥२५॥
इत्युक्त्वा दुःखितं सर्वं जनं तमुपजीविनम् । उवाचेदं धनाध्यक्षं धनमानीयतां मम ॥२६॥
ततोऽस्य धनमाजह्रुः सर्वं एवोपजीविनः । स राशिः सुमहांस्तत्र दर्शनीयो ह्यदृश्यत ॥२७॥
ततः स पुरुषव्याघ्रस्तद् धनं सहलक्ष्मणः । द्विजेभ्यो बालवृद्धेभ्यः कृपणेभ्यो ह्यदापयत् ॥२८॥

Like Kubera (the bestower of riches), Lakṣmaṇa, a (veritable) tiger among men, thereupon distributed that wealth (of Śrī Rāma) among the foremost of the Brahmans as instructed (by him). (23) Having bestowed abundant wealth, enough to sustain each one of them (for the entire period of his impending exile into the forest), Śrī Rāma then spoke (as follows) to his dependants standing with tears in their throat:— (24) "Till my return (from the forest) the house which belongs to Lakṣmaṇa and also this house which is (now) occupied by me should (always) be guarded by each one (of you) by turn." (25) Having instructed thus all his dependants, distressed as they were (at the thought of his exile), Śrī Rāma spoke as follows to his treasurer, "Let my wealth be brought (here)." (26) All his dependants thereupon brought his wealth (before him). That huge heap (of wealth collected there) really presented a splendid spectacle. (27) With the help of Lakṣmaṇa that tiger among men then actually caused that wealth to be distributed among Brahmans who were (yet mere) boys or aged, and to the afflicted. (28)

तत्रासीत् पिङ्गलो गार्ग्यस्त्रिजटो नाम वै द्विजः । क्षतवृत्तिर्वने नित्यं फालकुद्दाललाङ्गली ॥२९॥
तं वृद्धं तरुणी भार्या बालानादाय दारकान् । अब्रवीद् ब्राह्मणं वाक्यं स्त्रीणां भर्ता हि देवता ॥३०॥
अपास्य फालं कुद्दालं कुरुष्व वचनं मम । रामं दर्शय धर्मज्ञं यदि किंचिदवाप्स्यसि ॥३१॥
स भार्याया वचः श्रुत्वा शाटीमाच्छाद्य दुश्छदाम् । स प्रातिष्ठत पन्थानं यत्र रामनिवेशनम् ॥३२॥
भृग्वङ्गिरस्समं दीप्त्या त्रिजटं जनसंसदि । आ पञ्चमायाः कक्ष्याया नैतं कश्चिदवारयत् ॥३३॥
स राममासाद्य तदा त्रिजटो वाक्यमब्रवीत् । निर्धनो बहुपुत्रोऽस्मि राजपुत्र महाबल ॥३४॥

क्षतवृत्तिर्वने नित्यं प्रत्यवेक्षस्व मामिति । तमुवाच ततो रामः परिहाससमन्वितम् ॥३५॥
गवां सहस्रमप्येकं न च विश्राणितं मया । परिक्षिपसि दण्डेन यावत्तावदवाप्स्यसे ॥३६॥

They say there lived in those days in the forest (near about Ayodhya) a Brahman, Trijaṭa by name, born in the line of Garga, who looked pale (due to privations) and, (all) his means of subsistence having failed, always carried an axe, a spade and a ploughshare living as he did by digging the soil (in order to get roots and bulbs etc.). (29) Taking her young children (with her) his wife, who was (still) young, (approached and) spoke to the said Brahman, who had grown old, as follows:—"Although the husband is a (veritable) god to the weaker sex (does not deserve to be commanded by his wife), (pray) follow my instructions, discarding the hatchet and the spade. Seek the presence of Śrī Rāma, who knows his duty (by the Brahmans) and you are sure to get something at least." (30-31) Hearing the request of his wife and wrapping (about his lower limbs) a loin-cloth, that could hardly cover his body (tattered as it was), he set out on the track which led to Śrī Rāma's palace. (32) Up to the fifth gate none in the (large) concourse of men (collected at the gates of the palace) stopped this Trijaṭa, who vied with the sages Bhṛgu and Angirā in spiritual glow (befitting a Brahman). (33) Approaching Śrī Rāma, the said Trijaṭa then spoke as follows:—"I have many children, though destitute, O prince of extraordinary might ! (34) (All) my means of subsistence having failed, I perpetually dwell in the forest, (Pray) look to me. "Śrī Rāma thereupon replied jestingly to him (as follows):— (35) "Not even one thousand of my cows have been given away by me so far. You will get as many (of them) as you will cover by throwing your staff across them." (36)

सा शाटीं परितः कट्यां सम्भ्रान्तः परिवेष्ट्य ताम् । आविध्य दण्डं चिक्षेप सर्वप्राणेन वेगतः ॥३७॥
स तीर्त्वा सरयूपारं दण्डस्तस्य कराच्च्युतः । गोव्रजे बहुसाहस्रे पपातोक्षणसंनिधौ ॥३८॥
तं परिष्वज्य धर्मात्मा आ तस्मात् सरयूतटात् । आनयामास ता गावस्त्रिजटस्याश्रमं प्रति ॥३९॥
उवाच च तदा रामस्तं गार्ग्यमभिसान्त्वयन् । मन्युर्न खलु कर्तव्यः परिहासो ह्ययं मम ॥४०॥
इदं हि तेजस्तव यद् दुरत्ययं तदेव जिज्ञासितुमिच्छता मया ।
इमं भवानर्थमभिप्रचोदितो वृणीष्व किं चेदपरं व्यवस्यसि ॥४१॥
ब्रवीमि सत्ये न ते स्म यन्त्रणा धनं हि यद्यन्मम विप्रकारणात् ।
भवत्सु सम्यक्प्रतिपादनेन मयार्जितं चैव यशस्करं भवेत् ॥४२॥
ततः सभार्यस्त्रिजटो महामुनिर्गवामनीकं प्रतिगृह्य मोदितः ।
यशोबलप्रीतिसुखोपबृंहिणीस्तदाऽऽशिषः प्रत्यवदन्महात्मनः ॥४३॥
स चापि रामः प्रतिपूणपौरुषो महाधनं धर्मबलैरुपार्जितम् ।
नियोजयामास सुहृज्जनेऽचिराद् यथार्हसम्मानवचःप्रचोदितः ॥४४॥
द्विजः सुहृद् भृत्यजनोऽथवा तदा दरिद्रभिक्षाचरणश्च यो भवेत् ।
न तत्र कश्चिन्न बभूव तर्पितो यथार्हसम्माननदानसम्भ्रमैः ॥४५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्वात्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३२ ॥

Tightening his aforesaid loin-cloth round his waist and twirling his staff he violently threw it with all his might, excited as he was. (37) Released from his hand and flying across the Sarayu, that staff fell close to a bull in the midst of the multitude of cows numbering many thousand (grazing there). (38) Embracing him, Śrī Rāma of devout mind caused to be driven to Trijaṭa's hermitage (all) the cows (from the spot where the staff fell right) up to that bank of the Sarayu (beyond which the cows stood grazing). (39) Nay, consoling the said scion of Garga in every way, Śrī Rāma then said to him, "No offence should be taken by you, since this was only a jest indulged in by me. (40) You were requested by me to undergo this trial wishing (as I did) precisely to test this remarkable strength of yours, which is really hard to excel. If you desire anything else, (please) ask for it. (41) I tell you the truth: let there be no hesitation on your part; for whatever wealth belongs to me has been earned by me for the sake of Brahmans alone. Nay, through bestowal on you (Brahmans) according to the scriptural ordinance it will bring me renown." (42) Taking the herd of cows (bestowed upon him by Śrī Rāma) the great ascetic, Trijaṭa, who felt rejoiced with his wife, thereupon pronounced on Śrī Rāma (the magnanimous prince) at that time blessings calculated to enhance his reputation, strength, delight and happiness. (43) Encouraged by words expressive of highest regard befitting his rank, the illustrious Śrī Rāma too, who was endowed with perfect valour, portioned out to his near and dear ones in no time his enormous wealth earned through righteous might. (44) At that time in Ayodhya there was no Brahman, relation, dependant or pauper who was living on alms, who was not gratified with honour, gifts and attentions conformable to his deserts (45)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-two in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रयस्त्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXIII

Having distributed his immense riches among the Brahmans and others, Śrī Rāma, accompanied by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, proceeds to his father's gynaeceum to take leave of him. Remaining unruffled even on hearing *en route* the diverse talks of the citizens gathered here and there with melancholy writ large on their faces, the royal trio reach their destination and urge Sumantra to apprise their royal father of their arrival.

दत्त्वा तु सह वैदेह्या ब्राह्मणेभ्यो धनं बहु । जग्मतुः पितरं द्रष्टुं सीतया सह राघवौ ॥ १ ॥
ततो गृहीते प्रेष्याभ्यामशोभेतां तदायुधे । मालादामभिरासक्ते सीतया समलंकृते ॥ २ ॥
ततः प्रासादहर्म्याणि विमानशिखराणि च । अभिरुह्य जनः श्रीमानुदासीनो व्यलोकयत् ॥ ३ ॥

नहि रथ्याः सुशक्यन्ते गन्तुं बहुजनाकुलाः । आरुह्य तस्मात्प्रासादाद् दीनाः पश्यन्ति राघवम्॥ ४ ॥
पदातिं सानुजं दृष्ट्वा ससीतं च जनास्तदा । ऊचुर्बहुजना वाचः शोकोपहतचेतसः ॥ ५ ॥

Having portioned out with Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan) abundant riches to the Brahmans, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Raghu) for their part proceeded with her to see their father (Emperor Daśaratha). (1) Next to them shone the weapons of the two brothers, held by a couple of servants and nay, decorated with a number of wreaths and worshipped by Sītā (herself with sandal paste etc.). (2) Ascending (the roofs of) temples and mansions and the tops of seven-storeyed buildings wealthy people gazed despondently on them. (3) The streets could not be easily passed through, crowded as they were with many men; mounting, therefore, to (the top of) seven-storeyed buildings, people looked sorrowfully on Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) from those mansions. (4) Seeing Śrī Rāma walking with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa (his younger brother) at that time, many men offered remarks (as follows), their mind infatuated with grief:— (5)

यं यान्तमनुयाति स्म चतुरङ्गबलं महत् । तमेकं सीतया सार्धमनुयाति स्म लक्ष्मणः ॥ ६ ॥
ऐश्वर्यस्य रसज्ञः सन् कामानां चाकरो महान् । नेच्छत्येवानृतं कर्तुं वचनं धर्मगौरवात् ॥ ७ ॥
या न शक्या पुरा द्रष्टुं भूतैराकाशगैरपि । तामद्य सीतां पश्यन्ति राजमार्गगता जनाः ॥ ८ ॥
अङ्गरागोचितां सीतां रक्तचन्दनसेविनीम् । वर्षमुष्णं च शीतं च नेष्यत्याशु विवर्णताम् ॥ ९ ॥
अद्य नूनं दशरथः सत्त्वमाविश्य भाषते । नहि राजा प्रियं पुत्रं विवासयितुमर्हति ॥१०॥
निर्गुणस्यापि पुत्रस्य कथं स्याद् विनिवासनम् । किं पुनर्यस्य लोकोऽयं जितो वृत्तेन केवलम् ॥११॥
आनृशंस्यमनुक्रोशः श्रुतं शीलं दमः शमः । राघवं शोभयन्त्येते षड् गुणाः पुरुषर्षभम् ॥१२॥
तस्मात् तस्योपघातेन प्रजाः परमपीडिताः । औदकानीव सत्त्वानि ग्रीष्मे सलिलसंक्षयात् ॥१३॥
पीडया पीडितं सर्वं जगदस्य जगत्पतेः । मूलस्येवोपघातेन वृक्षः पुष्पफलोपगः ॥१४॥
मूलं ह्येषः मनुष्याणां धर्मसारो महाद्युतिः । पुष्पं फलं च पत्रं च शाखाश्चास्येतरे जनाः ॥१५॥

"Lo ! the same Śrī Rāma, who was (at one time) followed by a strong detachment consisting of all the four limbs (*viz*, infantry, cavalry, elephants and chariots), is walking unattended by body-guards with Sītā, followed by Lakṣmaṇa (alone). (6) He who, having tasted the delights of sovereignty, is a great repertory of objects of enjoyment is anxious not to belie the plighted word (of his father), prompted as he is by respect for virtue. (7) (Even) people on the roads are able today to behold Sītā, who could not formerly be seen even by beings coursing in the air. (8) Rain, heat and cold will quickly reduce to pallor Sītā, who deserves to be daubed with pigments (such as musk-paste) and habitually paints her body with the paste of red sandal. (9) Surely King Daśaratha has announced today his decision to banish Śrī Rāma identifying himself with some (evil) spirit; for otherwise (had he been his normal self) he ought not to have sent his dearest son into exile. (10) How could banishment be inflicted even on a son devoid of virtue, much less on him whose character alone has won the affection of the (entire) world ? (11) Harmlessness, compassion, learning, amiability of disposition, subjugation of the senses and tranquillity of mind—these six excellences adorn Śrī Rāma, the foremost of men. (12) People, therefore, feel extremely pained by the injury which is being done to him (by way of unmerited banishment) (even) as aquatic creatures are afflicted by depletion of water. (13) The whole world feels injured by the suffering inflicted on this protector of the world, (even) as a tree with its flowers and fruits is damaged by injury caused to its root. (14) For Śrī Rāma, whose strength is virtue and who is possessed of extraordinary lustre, is the root of the tree of humanity; while other men are flowers and fruits, leaves and boughs. (15)

ते लक्ष्मण इव क्षिप्रं सपत्न्यः सहबान्धवाः । गच्छन्तमनुगच्छामो येन गच्छति राघवः ॥१६॥
उद्यानानि परित्यज्य क्षेत्राणि च गृहाणि च । एकदुःखसुखा राममनुगच्छाम धार्मिकम् ॥१७॥
समुद्धृतनिधानानि परिध्वस्ताजिराणि च । उपात्तधनधान्यानि हृतसाराणि सर्वशः ॥१८॥
रजसाभ्यवकीर्णानि परित्यक्तानि दैवतैः । मूषकैः परिधावद्भिरुद्बिलैरावृतानि च ॥१९॥
अपेतोदकधूमानि हीनसम्मार्जनानि च । प्रणष्टबलिकर्मेज्यामन्त्रहोमजपानि च ॥२०॥
दुष्कालेनेव भग्नानि भिन्नभाजनवन्ति च । अस्मत्त्यक्तानि कैकेयी वेश्मानि प्रतिपद्यताम् ॥२१॥
वनं नगरमेवास्तु येन गच्छति राघवः । अस्माभिश्च परित्यक्तं पुरं सम्पद्यतां वनम् ॥२२॥
बिलानि दंष्ट्रिणः सर्वे सानूनि मृगपक्षिणः । त्यजन्त्वस्मद्भयाद्भीता गजाः सिंहा वनान्यपि ॥२३॥
अस्मत्त्यक्तं प्रपद्यन्तु सेव्यमानं त्यजन्तु च । तृणमांसफलादानं देशं व्यालमृगद्विजम् ॥२४॥
प्रपद्यतां हि कैकेयी सपुत्रा सह बान्धवैः । राघवेण वयं सर्वे वने वत्स्याम निर्वृताः ॥२५॥

"As such even as Lakṣmaṇa we will also with our wives and relations forthwith follow the departing Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), on the path the former is going to tread. (16) Relinquishing for good our gardens and fields and houses (too), let us follow the pious Śrī Rāma, sharing his joys and sorrows. (17) Let Kaikeyī enjoy as her share the dwellings deserted by us and robbed of their substance in every way—their treasures unearthed, their courtyards neglected, their wealth and (stocks of) foodgrains removed,—nay, covered by dust on all sides and (as such) deserted by the deities (presiding over them), overrun by mice coming out of their holes and scurrying here and there, water and smoke having disappeared from them, unswept, dilapidated as though by adverse times and strewn with broken vessels, the rites of offering oblations to all creatures as well as to the sacred fire, worship of gods, the chanting of sacred texts and muttering of prayers having altogether ceased. (18—21) Let the forest itself, for which Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) is leaving, turn into a city and let the city (of Ayodhya), (when) deserted by us, be converted into a forest. (22) Scared by fear of us, all the snakes will forsake their holes; the deer and birds, (their abode on) the mountain-peaks and elephants and lions, the forests. (23) Let them abandon the region going to be inhabited by us and flee for protection to the one forsaken by us. Let Kaikeyī with her son and relations actually obtain (as her share) the region where grass, meat and fruits can be had (in abundance) and which is inhabited by ferocious beasts and birds. We shall (on the other hand) live happily in the forest with Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu)." (24-25)

इत्येवं विविधा वाचो नानाजनसमीरिताः । शुश्राव राघवः श्रुत्वा न विचक्रेऽस्य मानसम् ॥२६॥
स तु वेश्म पुनर्मातुः कैलासशिखरप्रभम् । अभिचक्राम धर्मात्मा मत्तमातङ्गविक्रमः ॥२७॥
विनीतवीरपुरुषं प्रविश्य तु नृपालयम् । ददर्शावस्थितं दीनं सुमन्त्रमविदूरतः ॥२८॥
प्रतीक्षमाणोऽभिजनं तदाऽऽर्तमनार्तरूपः प्रहसन्निवाथ ।
जगाम रामः पितरं दिदृक्षुः पितुर्निदेशं विधिवच्चिकीर्षुः ॥२९॥

तत्पूर्वमैक्ष्वाकसुतो महात्मा रामो गमिष्यन् नृपमार्त्तरूपम् ।
व्यतिष्ठत प्रेक्ष्य तदा सुमन्त्रं पितुर्महात्मा प्रतिहारणार्थम् ॥३०॥
पितुर्निदेशेन तु धर्मवत्सलो वनप्रवेशे कृतबुद्धिनिश्चयः ।
स राघवः प्रेक्ष्य सुमन्त्रमब्रवीन्निवेदयस्वागमनं नृपाय मे ॥३१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्रयस्त्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३३ ॥

Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) heard the aforesaid remarks of diverse kinds uttered by various men; hearing them (however) his mind was not (in the least) disturbed. (26) The prince, whose mind was given to piety, for his part walked once more with the strides of an elephant in rut to the palace of his (step-) mother (Kaikeyī), which shone as a peak of the Kailāsa mountain (and in which his father was still lingering). (27) Entering the royal palace, however, which was being guarded by disciplined and valiant soldiers, he saw Sumantra standing disconsolate not very far (from the palace). (28) Appearing in no way afflicted, even though seeing the people of Ayodhya (his native place) distressed at that time, Śrī Rāma as though smiling, forthwith approached his father, eager to see him and desirous of duly carrying out his behest. (29) Catching sight of Sumantra before that, while approaching the king, who wore a wretched appearance, the high-souled and high-minded Śrī Rāma, son of Daśaratha (a scion of Ikṣwāku), waited awhile to announce his presence to his father. (30) Perceiving Sumantra, the illustrious Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who was devoted to his duty and had for his part deliberately made up his mind to retire to the woods in obedience to the command of his father, said to him, "(Pray) announce my arrival to His Majesty." (31)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-three in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुस्त्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXIV

Apprised of Śrī Rāma's arrival by Sumantra, Daśaratha commands him to usher in Śrī Rāma with his consort. Seeing the emperor fall unconscious at the very sight of the heir-apparent, the ladies of the royal household start wailing piteously. On Śrī Rāma's soliciting his permission to retire to the woods the king enjoins him to take his father captive and ascend the throne. Śrī Rāma in his turn consoles his father by assuring him that he has no hankering for royal fortune and that to him obedience to his father's command is of utmost importance. Daśaratha, however, falls unconscious again at the very thought of his separation from Śrī Rāma and Sumantra as well as all the ladies of the gynaeceum follow suit.

ततः कमलपत्राक्षः श्यामो निरुपमो महान् । उवाच रामस्तं सूतं पितुराख्याहि मामिति ॥ १ ॥

स रामप्रेषितः क्षिप्रं संतापकलुषेन्द्रियम् । प्रविश्य नृपतिं सूतो निःश्वसन्तं ददर्श ह ॥ २ ॥
उपरक्तमिवादित्यं भस्मच्छन्नमिवानलम् । तटाकमिव निस्तोयमपश्यज्जगतीपतिम् ॥ ३ ॥
आबोध्य च महाप्राज्ञः परमाकुलचेतनम् । राममेवानुशोचन्तं सूतः प्राञ्जलिरब्रवीत् ॥ ४ ॥
तं वर्धयित्वा राजानं पूर्वं सूतो जयाशिषा । भयविक्लवया वाचा मन्दया श्लक्ष्णयाब्रवीत् ॥ ५ ॥
अयं स पुरुषव्याघ्रो द्वारि तिष्ठति ते सुतः । ब्राह्मणेभ्यो धनं दत्त्वा सर्वं चैवोपजीविनाम् ॥ ६ ॥
स त्वां पश्यतु भद्रं ते रामः सत्यपराक्रमः । सर्वान् सुहृद आपृच्छ्य त्वां हीदानीं दिदृक्षते ॥ ७ ॥
गमिष्यति महारण्यं तं पश्य जगतीपते । वृतं राजगुणैः सर्वैरादित्यमिव रश्मिभिः ॥ ८ ॥
स सत्यवाक्यो धर्मात्मा गाम्भीर्यात् सागरोपमः । आकाश इव निष्पङ्को नरेन्द्रः प्रत्युवाच तम् ॥ ९ ॥
सुमन्त्रानय मे दारान् ये केचिदिह मामकाः । दारैः परिवृतः सर्वैर्द्रष्टुमिच्छामि राघवम् ॥१०॥

Then the lotus-eyed Śrī Rāma, who was dark-brown of complexion and great beyond compare, spoke (as follows) to the said charioteer-minister :—"(Please) speak about me to father." (1) Promptly going inside, when despatched by Śrī Rāma, the charioteer found the king heaving sighs, his mind distracted with agony: so the tradition goes. (2) He regarded the emperor as one would view the sun obscured by intervention of the earth between it and the eye or a fire covered with ashes or a pond without water. (3) Accosting the king, whose mind was extremely agitated and who was grieving for Śrī Rāma alone, the highly enlightened charioteer, spoke with joined palms to him. (4) Encouraging Daśaratha first with benedictions wishing him triumph, the charioteer addressed him (as follows) in a low, soft and sweet tone faltering with fear :—(5) "Having given away all his wealth to the Brahmans as well as to his dependants, this illustrious son of yours, a (veritable) tiger among men, stands at the door. (6) Let that Rāma of unfailing prowess see you: may good betide you; for, having taken leave of all his near and dear ones he now desires to see Your Majesty. (7) He is about to proceed to the extensive forest. (Pray,) behold the prince, who is encompassed by kingly virtues even as the sun is encircled by rays." (8) That pious monarch, who was truthful of speech and vied with the ocean in profundity, nay, who was stainless as the sky, replied to him (as follows) :—(9) "Sumantra, bring all my consorts who are here (in the gynaeceum). I wish to see Rāma (a scion of Raghu) when I am accompanied by my wives." (10)

सोऽन्तःपुरमतीत्यैव स्त्रियस्ता वाक्यमब्रवीत् । आर्यो ह्वयति वो राजा गम्यतां तत्र माचिरम् ॥११॥
एवमुक्ताः स्त्रियः सर्वाः सुमन्त्रेण नृपाज्ञया । प्रचक्रमुस्तद्भवनं भर्तुराज्ञाय शासनम् ॥१२॥
अर्धत्रिशतास्तत्र प्रमदास्ताम्रलोचनाः । कौसल्यां परिवार्याथ शनैर्जग्मुर्धृतव्रताः ॥१३॥
आगतेषु च दारेषु समवेक्ष्य महीपतिः । उवाच राजा तं सूतं सुमन्त्रानय मे सुतम् ॥१४॥
स सूतो राममादाय लक्ष्मणं मैथिलीं तथा । जगामाभिमुखस्तूर्णं सकाशं जगतीपतेः ॥१५॥
स राजा पुत्रमायान्तं दृष्ट्वा चारात् कृताञ्जलिम् । उत्पपातासनात् तूर्णमार्तः स्त्रीजनसंवृतः ॥१६॥
सोऽभिदुद्राव वेगेन रामं दृष्ट्वा विशाम्पतिः । तमसम्प्राप्य दुःखार्तः पपात भुवि मूर्च्छितः ॥१७॥
तं रामोऽभ्यपतत् क्षिप्रं लक्ष्मणश्च महारथः । विसंज्ञमिव दुःखेन सशोकं नृपतिं तथा ॥१८॥
स्त्रीसहस्रनिनादश्च संजज्ञे राजवेश्मनि । हा हा रामेति सहसा भूषणध्वनिमिश्रितः ॥१९॥
तं परिष्वज्य बाहुभ्यां तावुभौ रामलक्ष्मणौ । पर्यङ्के सीतया सार्धं रुदन्तः समवेशयन् ॥२०॥

Directly on entering the apartments of the (other) queens, Sumantra addressed those ladies as follows:—"His Majesty the king summons you (all); (pray) let yourselves be gone there without delay." (11) Coming to know the command of their husband, when addressed as above by Sumantra under orders of His Majesty, all the (royal) ladies proceeded to Kaikeyī's apartments. (12) Encircling Kausalyā (the seniormost queen), three hundred and fifty young ladies, steadfast in their vow (of devotion to their husband), forthwith repaired to the king's presence, their eyes reddened (through grief over their impending separation from Śrī Rāma). (13) Observing his consorts when they had come, the king-emperor said to the celebrated charioteer, "Sumantra, (now) bring my son (before me)." (14) Taking Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā (princess of Mithila) the said charioteer speedily returned to the emperor's presence with his face turned towards the latter. (15) Beholding his son (Śrī Rāma) coming with joined palms from a distance, the illustrious king immediately rose from his seat along with the ladies, afflicted as he was. (16) Seeing Śrī Rāma, the said king ran with impetuosity towards the latter. Before reaching him (however) he dropped senseless to the ground, stricken as he was with sorrow. (17) Śrī Rāma as well as Lakṣmaṇa, an eminent car-warrior, rushed at once to the king, who lay quite unconscious as aforesaid, full of grief as he was through agony. (18) Nay, there burst forth all of a sudden in the palace a loud wail, mixed with the tinkling of ornaments, of thousands of women crying "Alas! Alas!! O Rāma!!!" (19) Supporting him in their arms and crying, both the princes, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, along with Sītā laid him on the couch. (20)

अथ रामो मुहूर्तस्य लब्धसंज्ञं महीपतिम् । उवाच प्राञ्जलिर्बाष्पशोकार्णवपरिप्लुतम् ॥२१॥
आपृच्छे त्वां महाराज सर्वेषामीश्वरोऽपि नः । प्रस्थितं दण्डकारण्यं पश्य त्वं कुशलेन माम् ॥२२॥
लक्ष्मणं चानुजानीहि सीता चान्वेतु मां वनम् । कारणैर्बहुभिस्तथ्यैर्वार्यमाणौ न चेच्छतः ॥२३॥
अनुजानीहि सर्वान् नः शोकमुत्सृज्य मानद । लक्ष्मणं मां च सीतां च प्रजापतिरिवात्मजान् ॥२४॥
प्रतीक्षमाणमव्यग्रमनुज्ञां जगतीपतेः । उवाच राजा सम्प्रेक्ष्य वनवासाय राघवम् ॥२५॥
अहं राघव कैकेय्या वरदानेन मोहितः । अयोध्यायां त्वमेवाद्य भव राजा निगृह्य माम् ॥२६॥
एवमुक्तो नृपतिना रामो धर्मभृतां वरः । प्रत्युवाचाञ्जलिं कृत्वा पितरं वाक्यकोविदः ॥२७॥
भवान् वर्षसहस्राय पृथिव्या नृपते पतिः । अहं त्वरण्ये वत्स्यामि न मे राज्यस्य काङ्क्षिता ॥२८॥
नव पञ्च च वर्षाणि वनवासे विहृत्य ते । पुनः पादौ ग्रहीष्यामि प्रतिज्ञान्ते नराधिप ॥२९॥

With joined palms Śrī Rāma then spoke as follows to the emperor, who had soon regained his consciousness and was plunged in an ocean of grief accompanied by tears:—(21) "I take leave of you, O emperor, (since) you are the master of us all. (Pray) regard me, who am about to leave for the Daṇḍaka forest, with favour. (22) Grant leave to Lakṣmaṇa and let Sītā too accompany me to the forest. Though being forbidden (by me) on numerous true grounds, they do not wish to stay behind. (23) Giving up grief, O bestower of honour (on all), grant leave to us all, *viz*, Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā and myself, (even) as Brahmā (the lord of created beings) did to his sons (Sanaka and his three brothers, who were intent on practising austerities in the forest)." (24) Fixing his gaze on Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who was coolly awaiting His Majesty's permission to dwell in the forest, the king said:—(25) "I have been deprived of my senses by Kaikeyī through a boon (granted by me in her favour), O scion of Raghu ! Taking me captive, (therefore), be you the king of Ayodhya today. (26) Joining his palms when told thus by the king, Śrī Rāma, the foremost of the champions of righteousness, who was a master of expression, replied (as follows) to his father :—(27) "Be you the ruler of the globe for another thousand years, O king ! I for my part shall live in the forest, (since) there is no ambition for sovereignty in me. (28) Having diverted myself in the course of my sojourn in the forest for nine years and five I shall clasp your feet once more after redeeming my pledge, O ruler of men !" (29)

रुदन्नार्त्तः प्रियं पुत्रं सत्यपाशेन संयुतः । कैकेय्या चोद्यमानस्तु मिथो राजा तमब्रवीत् ॥३०॥
श्रेयसे वृद्धये तात पुनरागमनाय च । गच्छस्वारिष्टमव्यग्रः पन्थानमकुतोभयम् ॥३१॥
नहि सत्यात्मनस्तात धर्माभिमनसस्तव । संनिवर्तयितुं बुद्धिः शक्यते रघुनन्दन ॥३२॥
अद्य त्विदानीं रजनीं पुत्र मा गच्छ सर्वथा । एकाहं दर्शनेनापि साधु तावच्चराम्यहम् ॥३३॥
मातरं मां च सम्पश्यन् वसेमामद्य शर्वरीम् । तर्पितः सर्वकामैस्त्वं श्वः काल्ये साधयिष्यसि ॥३४॥
दुष्करं क्रियते पुत्र सर्वथा राघव प्रिय । त्वया हि मत्प्रियार्थं तु वनमेवमुपाश्रितम् ॥३५॥
न चैतन्मे प्रियं पुत्र शपे सत्येन राघव । छन्नया चलितस्त्वस्मि स्त्रिया भस्माग्निकल्पया ॥३६॥
वञ्चना या तु लब्धा मे तां त्वं निस्तर्तुमिच्छसि । अनया वृत्तसादिन्या कैकेय्याभिप्रचोदितः ॥३७॥
न चैतदाश्चर्यतमं यत् त्वं ज्येष्ठः सुतो मम । अपानृतकथं पुत्र पितरं कर्तुमिच्छसि ॥३८॥

Being urged in secret by Kaikeyī, the afflicted monarch, who was held fast in the fetters of truth, then said weeping to his aforesaid beloved son :—(30) "Proceed, my darling, with an undisturbed mind on a happy and safe journey, which may bring you happiness hereafter and prosperity in this world and bring you back (to Ayodhyā). (31) Your decision (to dwell in the forest), O the delight of the Raghus, truthful as you are by nature and your mind being given to piety, O darling, cannot be reversed. (32) (Pray) do not leave in any case today and stay at least for this night (with me), so that I may live happily by your sight at least for a day. (33) Looking at your mother and myself stay on the coming night today. Having been gratified (by me) with all desired objects you may leave the (very) next morning. (34) Something which is in every respect hard to accomplish (for others) is being done by you, my beloved son, since it is for my pleasure that the forest is thus being resorted to (by you), O scion of Raghu ! (35) But I swear by my faith, my son : your exile is not agreeable to me, O Rāma ! On the other hand I have been deflected from my course by Kaikeyī, who concealed her intentions and (thus) resembled a fire covered with ashes. (36) (How noble of you that) egged on by Kaikeyī, who has cast to the winds the (time-honoured) family custom (of a kingdom being inherited by the eldest son), you seek to redeem a pledge which was fraudulently extracted from me ! (37) It is no great wonder, my child, that you, my seniormost son (both in point of age and virtue) should seek to make your father free from mendacity." (38)

अथ रामस्तदा श्रुत्वा पितुरार्त्तस्य भाषितम् । लक्ष्मणेन सह भ्रात्रा दीनो वचनमब्रवीत् ॥३९॥
प्राप्स्यामि यानद्य गुणान् को मे श्वस्तान् प्रदास्यति । अपक्रमणमेवातः सर्वकामैरहं वृणे ॥४०॥
इयं सराष्ट्रा सजना धनधान्यसमाकुला । मया विसृष्टा वसुधा भरताय प्रदीयताम् ॥४१॥

वनवासकृता बुद्धिर्न च मेऽद्य चलिष्यति । यस्तु युद्धे वरो दत्तः कैकेय्यै वरद त्वया ॥४२॥
दीयतां निखिलेनैव सत्यस्त्वं भव पार्थिव । अहं निदेशं भवतो यथोक्तमनुपालयन् ॥४३॥
चतुर्दश समा वत्स्ये वने वनचरैः सह । मा विमर्शो वसुमती भरताय प्रदीयताम् ॥४४॥
नहि मे काङ्क्षितं राज्यं सुखमात्मनि वा प्रियम् । यथानिदेशं कर्तुं वै तवैव रघुनन्दन ॥४५॥
अपगच्छतु ते दुःखं मा भूर्बाष्पपरिप्लुतः । नहि क्षुभ्यति दुर्धर्षः समुद्रः सरितां पतिः ॥४६॥
नैवाहं राज्यमिच्छामि न सुखं न च मेदिनीम् । नैव सर्वानिमान् कामान् न स्वर्गं न च जीवितुम् ॥४७॥
त्वामहं सत्यमिच्छामि नानृतं पुरुषर्षभ । प्रत्यक्षं तव सत्येन सुकृतेन च ते शपे ॥४८॥
न च शक्यं मया तात स्थातुं क्षणमपि प्रभो । स शोकं धारयस्वेमं न हि मेऽस्ति विपर्ययः ॥४९॥
अर्थितो ह्यस्मि कैकेय्या वनं गच्छेति राघव । मया चोक्तं व्रजामीति तत्सत्यमनुपालये ॥५०॥
मा चोत्कण्ठां कृथा देव वने रंस्यामहे वयम् । प्रशान्तहरिणाकीर्णे नानाशकुनिनादिते ॥५१॥

Distressed to hear on that occasion the request of his afflicted father, Śrī Rāma, along with his (younger) brother, Lakṣmaṇa, submitted as follows :—(39) "To-morrow who will offer me the delicacies which I hope to get today? I should therefore only prefer to get away in lieu of all the enjoyments (you can offer). (40) Relinquished by me, this earth including the state (of Kosala) and its people and full of riches and food-grains, may be made over to Bharata. (41) My resolution to dwell in the forest shall in no case be shaken. The boon which was granted by you on the battle-field in favour of Kaikeyī, O bestower of boons, may, therefore, be implemented *in toto* at all events, and (thus) vindicate you your truthfulness, O ruler of the earth! Carrying out your aforesaid command I shall dwell in the forest with ascetics for fourteen years. Let there be no demur (on your part). The earth may be made over to Bharata. (42—44) Indeed neither sovereignty nor joy nor what is pleasing to the mind is coveted by me. On the other hand, to do as enjoined by you is solely desired by me, O the delight of the Raghus! (45) Let your sorrow disappear and let you not be bathed with tears. The ocean, the lord of the rivers, which it is (so) difficult to assail, does not overstep its bounds. (46) I do not at all hanker for sovereignty or joy nor again for the earth nor in any case for all these delights of sense nor for heaven nor even for life. (47) I swear by my veracity and virtue (earned by me in my past lives) as well as by you in your presence: I (only) wish you to prove true (to your word) and never to be false, O jewel among men! (48) Nor is it possible for me, dear father, to stay on (at home) even for an instant longer. Therefore restrain this grief, my lord; for there is no going back upon my word (now). (49) Since I have been commanded by mother Kaikeyī in the words 'Proceed to the forest, O scion of Raghu', and the reply given by me was 'I am going', I must redeem that pledge (of mine). (50) Nor should you feel anxious (on our score), my lord! We shall sport in the forest crowded with highly peaceful deer and rendered noisy by birds of various kinds. (51)

पिता हि दैवतं तात दैवतानामपि स्मृतम् । तस्माद् दैवतमित्येव करिष्यामि पितुर्वचः ॥५२॥
चतुर्दशसु वर्षेषु गतेषु नृपसत्तम । पुनर्द्रक्ष्यसि मां प्राप्तं संतापोऽयं विमुच्यताम् ॥५३॥
येन संस्तम्भनीयोऽयं सर्वो बाष्पकलो जनः । स त्वं पुरुषशार्दूल किमर्थं विक्रियां गतः ॥५४॥

पुरं च राष्ट्रं च मही च केवला मया विसृष्टा भरताय दीयताम् ।
अहं निदेशं भवतोऽनुपालयन् वनं गमिष्यामि चिराय सेवितुम् ॥५५॥
मया विसृष्टां भरतो महीमिमां सशैलखण्डां सपुरोपकाननाम् ।
शिवासु सीमास्वनुशास्तु केवलं त्वया यदुक्तं नृपते तथास्तु तत् ॥५६॥
न मे तथा पार्थिव धीयते मनो महत्सु कामेषु न चात्मनः प्रिये ।
यथा निदेशे तव शिष्टसम्मते व्यपैतु दुःखं तव मत्कृतेऽनघ ॥५७॥
तदद्य नैवानघ राज्यमव्ययं न सर्वकामान् वसुधां न मैथिलीम् ।
न चिन्तितं त्वामनृतेन योजयन् वृणीय सत्यं व्रतमस्तु ते तथा ॥५८॥
फलानि मूलानि च भक्षयन् वने गिरींश्च पश्यन् सरितः सरांसि च ।
वनं प्रविश्यैव विचित्रपादपं सुखी भविष्यामि तवास्तु निर्वृतिः ॥५९॥

"Indeed a father has been declared to be a (veritable) deity even among gods. Hence I shall do the bidding of my father (yourself) as that of a god. (52) When fourteen years have elapsed, you will find me come back, O jewel among kings! (Hence) let this agony be given up. (53) Wherefore, O tiger among men, have you fallen a victim to grief—you, by whom all these (other) people, bathed in tears, ought to be consoled? (5) Renounced by me, the city (of Ayodhya) and the state (of Kosala) and the rest of the globe too may be given to Bharata. Obeying your command, I (for myself) shall proceed to the forest in order to dwell in it for long. (55) Let Bharata barely rule over this globe, including the mountain ranges and cities with their gardens, relinquished by me. He should (neither enjoy the sovereignty nor feel proud of it but) keep within the bounds of righteousness (salutary for a king). Let the pledge which has been given by you (to Kaikeyī) come to be true, O protector of men! (56) My heart is not given so much to the great delights of sense coveted (by all) nor to that which is pleasing to the mind as to the carrying out of your command which is approved by the wise. Let your agony on my score, O sinless king, altogether disappear. (57) Disfiguring you, who are full of anxiety (on my score), with (the stigma of) mendacity, I do not on any account court eternal sovereignty nor all the delights of sense (coveted by the world) nor the (entire) earth nor (even) Sītā (princess of Mithila) today O sinless one! (Therefore) let your pledge (given to Kaikeyī) prove true. (58) Living in the forest on fruits and roots and viewing the mountains, rivers and lakes, I shall be happy the moment I enter the forest consisting of various trees. Let peace come to you (on this account)." (59)

एवं स राजा व्यसनाभिपन्नस्तापेन दुःखेन च पीड्यमानः ।
आलिङ्ग्य पुत्रं सुविनष्टसंज्ञो भूमिं गतो नैव चिचेष्ट किंचित् ॥६०॥
देव्यः समस्ता रुरुदुः समेतास्तां वर्जयित्वा नरदेवपत्नीम् ।
रुदन् सुमन्त्रोऽपि जगाम मूर्च्छां हाहाकृतं तत्र बभूव सर्वम् ॥६१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुस्त्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३४ ॥

Embracing his son (Śrī Rāma), who had spoken as above, King Daśaratha, who had fallen on evil days and was being tormented with a burning sensation and agony, fell utterly unconscious to the ground and did not show any sign of life at all. (60) Barring that (favourite) consort of Daśaratha (a ruler of men) all the queens assembled (there) began to cry. Weeping aloud Sumantra too fell into a swoon and everyone there began to lament loudly. (61)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-four in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चत्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXV

Hoping that by being provoked to anger Kaikeyī might come round and relax her insistence on sending Śrī Rāma into exile, Sumantra harshly reproaches her, reminding her of her mother's misbehaviour towards her husband (Kaikeyī's father). Kaikeyī, however, remains adamant and does not budge even an inch from her purpose.

ततो निधूय सहसा शिरो निःश्वस्य चासकृत् । पाणिं पाणौ विनिष्पिष्य दन्तान् कटकटाय्य च ॥ १ ॥
लोचने कोपसंरक्ते वर्णं पूर्वोचितं जहत् । कोपाभिभूतः सहसा संतापमशुभं गतः ॥ २ ॥
मनः समीक्षमाणश्च सूतो दशरथस्य च । कम्पयन्निव कैकेय्या हृदयं वाक्शरैः शितैः ॥ ३ ॥
वाक्यवज्रैरनुपमैर्निर्भिन्दन्निव चाशुभैः । कैकेय्याः सर्वमर्माणि सुमन्त्रः प्रत्यभाषत ॥ ४ ॥
यस्यास्तव पतिस्त्यक्तो राजा दशरथः स्वयम् । भर्ता सर्वस्य जगतः स्थावरस्य चरस्य च ॥ ५ ॥
नह्यकार्यतमं किंचित् तव देवीह विद्यते । पतिघ्नीं त्वामहं मन्ये कुलघ्नीमपि चान्ततः ॥ ६ ॥
यन्महेन्द्रमिवाजय्यं दुष्प्रकम्प्यमिवाचलम् । महोदधिमिवाक्षोभ्यं संतापयसि कर्मभिः ॥ ७ ॥
मावमंस्था दशरथं भर्तारं वरदं पतिम् । भर्तुरिच्छा हि नारीणां पुत्रकोट्या विशिष्यते ॥ ८ ॥
यथावयो हि राज्यानि प्राप्नुवन्ति नृपक्षये । इक्ष्वाकुकुलनाथेऽस्मिंस्तं लोपयितुमिच्छसि ॥ ९ ॥

Beating his head all of a sudden and sighing again and again, pressing his hand against the other and grinding his teeth, turning his eyes crimson with wrath, shedding his former (normal) colour, overwhelmed (as he was) with anger, and, suddenly falling a prey to bitter agony, nay, carefully reading the mind of Daśaratha, Sumantra spoke as follows, shaking Kaikeyī's heart as it were with sharp arrows in the form of words and as though piercing all her vitals with his acrimonious words resembling so many peerless thunderbolts:—(1—4) "Surely there is nothing on earth most undesirable for you, by whom your husband, King Daśaratha himself, the supporter of the entire creation, both immobile and mobile, stands betrayed O queen! I consider you to be the murderess of your husband and ultimately the exterminator of your race too, in that you torment with your actions your husband, who is invincible as the great Indra, unshakable as a mountain and imperturbable as an ocean. (5—7) Do not despise Daśaratha, your husband and lord, the bestower of boons, as the will of a husband is superior to (that of) ten millions of sons. (8) Indeed on the death of a king his sons inherit the sovereign rights according to seniority of age. You seek to violate this (time-honoured) practice (even) in the presence (lifetime) of this ruler of the Ikṣwākus! (9)

राजा भवतु ते पुत्रो भरतः शास्तु मेदिनीम् । वयं तत्र गमिष्यामो यत्र रामो गमिष्यति ॥१०॥
न च ते विषये कश्चिद् ब्राह्मणो वस्तुमर्हति । तादृशं त्वममर्यादमद्य कर्म करिष्यसि ॥११॥
नूनं सर्वे गमिष्यामो मार्गं रामनिषेवितम् । त्यक्ताया बान्धवैः सर्वैर्ब्राह्मणैः साधुभिः सदा ॥१२॥
का प्रीती राज्यलाभेन तव देवि भविष्यति । तादृशं त्वममर्यादं कर्म कर्तुं चिकीर्षसि ॥१३॥
आश्चर्यमिव पश्यामि यस्यास्ते वृत्तमीदृशम् । आचरन्त्या न विदृता सद्यो भवति मेदिनी ॥१४॥
महाब्रह्मर्षिसृष्टा वा ज्वलन्तो भीमदर्शनाः । धिग्वाग्दण्डा न हिंसन्ति रामप्रव्राजने स्थिताम् ॥१५॥
आम्रं छित्त्वा कुठारेण निम्बं परिचरेत् तु कः । यश्चैनं पयसा सिञ्चेन्नैवास्य मधुरो भवेत् ॥१६॥
आभिजात्यं हि ते मन्ये यथा मातुस्तथैव च । नहि निम्बात् स्रवेत् क्षौद्रं लोके निगदितं वचः ॥१७॥

"Let your son, Bharata, be crowned king and rule over the earth. We (for our part) shall go wheresoever Rāma goes. (10) Nor should any Brahman dwell in your kingdom. If you perpetrate today such an act of impropriety (as you are intent on perpetrating) we shall all positively follow the path resorted to by Śrī Rāma. What joy, O royal lady, will be derived through attainment of sovereignty by you, who will (thus) be deserted for good by all your kith and kin, Brahmans and (other) pious souls? You seek to perpetrate such an act of impropriety. (11—13) I reckon it a wonder that the earth is not immediately rent asunder as a sequel to your resorting to such (improper) conduct. Nor do rods of punishment in the form of fiery and obviously fearful reproach uttered by great Brahman sages (Vasiṣṭha and others) kill you, who are bent on exiling Śrī Rāma! (14-15) Who on earth will nurture a Neem tree (with its proverbially bitter leaves and fruits etc.), felling down a mango tree with an axe? And a Neem tree will not turn sweet for him who nourishes it with milk. (16) Indeed I account your innate disposition to be exactly similar to that of your mother, The proverb is often quoted in the world that surely honey does not flow from a Neem tree. (17)

तव मातुरसद्ग्राहं विद्मः पूर्वं यथा श्रुतम् । पितुस्ते वरदः कश्चिद् ददौ वरमनुत्तमम् ॥१८॥
सर्वभूतरुतं तस्मात् संजज्ञे वसुधाधिपः । तेन तिर्यग्गतानां च भूतानां विदितं वचः ॥१९॥
ततो जृम्भस्य शयने विरुताद् भूरिवर्चसः । पितुस्ते विदितो भावः स तत्र बहुधाहसत् ॥२०॥
तत्र ते जननी क्रुद्धा मृत्युपाशमभीप्सती । हासं ते नृपते सौम्य जिज्ञासामीति चाब्रवीत् ॥२१॥
नृपश्चोवाच तां देवीं हासं शंसामि ते यदि । ततो मे मरणं सद्यो भविष्यति न संशयः ॥२२॥
माता ते पितरं देवि पुनः केकयमब्रवीत् । शंस मे जीव वा मा वा न मां त्वं प्रहसिष्यसि ॥२३॥
प्रियया च तथोक्तः स केकयः पृथिवीपतिः । तस्मै तं वरदायार्थं कथयामास तत्त्वतः ॥२४॥
ततः स वरदः साधू राजानं प्रत्यभाषत । म्रियतां ध्वंसतां वेयं मा शंसीस्त्वं महीपते ॥२५॥
स तच्छ्रुत्वा वचस्तस्य प्रसन्नमनसो नृपः । मातरं ते निरस्याशु विजहार कुबेरवत् ॥२६॥
तथा त्वमपि राजानं दुर्जनाचरिते पथि । असद्ग्राहमिमं मोहात् कुरुषे पापदर्शिनी ॥२७॥

"We know as heard of in the past the intentness of your mother on evil. Someone capable of granting boons bestowed a most excellent boon on your father. (18) By virtue of it the king (your father) could understand the language of all created beings. The talk of those belonging to the sub-human species was thereby understood by him. (19) From the shrill cry of a bird heard by him while in his bed the meaning of it was accordingly deciphered by your exceedingly glorious father and he

laughed over it repeatedly. (20) Your mother grew indignant at this and, seeking (even) to hang him (in case he refused to disclose the reason of his laughter), spoke (as follows:—'I wish to know the meaning of your laughter, O gentle monarch!) (21) The king too replied to that royal lady, 'If I tell you the reason of my laughter, my death will speedily follow from it: there is no doubt about it.' (22) Your mother then said to your father, the ruler of the Kekayas, 'Live or die as you will; (in any case) tell me the reason of your laughter. (Then alone shall I be satisfied that) you shall not laugh at me (hereafter).' (23) Told thus by his beloved consort, the said king of the Kekayas for his part correctly reported the matter to the sage who had bestowed the boon on him. (24) Thereupon the holy man who had bestowed the boon on him replied to the king, 'Let her die or depart (from your house for her parents' home); reveal you not the secret (to her), O ruler of the earth!' (25) Hearing the aforesaid reply of the holy man, who was pleased at heart (with him), and speedily repudiating your mother, the said king (your father) lived happily like Kubera (the god of riches). (26) Treading on the path trodden by wicked men and seeing evil (everywhere), you too likewise are urging this emperor through infatuation to adopt a wrong course. (27)

सत्यश्चात्र प्रवादोऽयं लौकिकः प्रतिभाति मा। पितॄन् समनुजायन्ते नरा मातरमङ्गनाः ॥२८॥
नैवं भव गृहाणेदं यदाह वसुधाधिपः। भर्तुरिच्छामुपास्येह जनस्यास्य गतिर्भव ॥२९॥
मा त्वं प्रोत्साहिता पापैर्देवराजसमप्रभम्। भर्तारं लोकभर्तारमसद्धर्ममुपादध ॥३०॥
नहि मिथ्या प्रतिज्ञातं करिष्यति तवानघः। श्रीमान् दशरथो राजा देवि राजीवलोचनः ॥३१॥
ज्येष्ठो वदान्यः कर्मण्यः स्वधर्मस्यापि रक्षिता। रक्षिता जीवलोकस्य बली रामोऽभिषिच्यताम् ॥३२॥
परिवादो हि ते देवि महाँल्लोके चरिष्यति। यदि रामो वनं याति विहाय पितरं नृपम् ॥३३॥
स्वराज्यं राघवः पातु भव त्वं विगतज्वरा। नहि ते राघवादन्यः क्षमः पुरवरे वसन् ॥३४॥
रामे हि यौवराज्यस्थे राजा दशरथो वनम्। प्रवेक्ष्यति महेष्वासः पूर्ववृत्तमनुस्मरन् ॥३५॥

"Nay, the popular saying on this subject that males take after their father and females after their mother appears to me as true. (28) Do not follow (the ways of) your mother, (and) accept that which the emperor enjoins (on you). Following the will of your husband, be a protectress to these people here. (29) Do not, as incited by the wicked, constrain your husband,—who is (at the same time) the protector of the world and vies in splendour with Indra,—to adopt an improper course of conduct. (30) The glorious and lotus-eyed King Daśaratha, who is free from sin, would not belie the promise made by him to you, O royal lady! (31) Let Rāma, the eldest (of his sons),—who is generous, strong and given to righteous acts and is capable not only of vindicating his own duty as a Kṣatriya but also of protecting the (entire) living creation, be installed on the throne (of Ayodhya). (32) A great calumny will surely spread about you, O royal lady, if Rāma goes to the forest, leaving his royal father. (33) Let Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) protect his own kingdom and be you free from anxiety. Ruling over Ayodhya (the foremost of cities) none indeed other than Śrī Rāma will be favourably disposed to you. (34) Bearing in mind the conduct of his forbears, King Daśaratha, who wields a mighty bow, will surely retire to the forest in the event of Śrī Rāma being installed in the office of Prince Regent." (35)

इति सान्त्वैश्च तीक्ष्णैश्च कैकेयीं राजसंसदि । भूयः संक्षोभयामास सुमन्त्रस्तु कृताञ्जलिः ॥३६॥
नैव सा क्षुभ्यते देवी न च स्म परिदूयते । न चास्या मुखवर्णस्य लक्ष्यते विक्रिया तदा ॥३७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चत्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३५ ॥

In this way with joined palms Sumantra for his part violently shook Kaikeyī with pungent remarks as well as with kind words in the king's court. (36) The said queen, however, was neither excited nor agonized nor was any change observed at that time in the colour of her face. (37)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-five in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षट्त्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXVI

Daśaratha instructs Sumantra to take a detachment of the army and the exchequer along with Śrī Rāma, to which Kaikeyī objects and insists on his being sent into exile without any resources on the analogy of Asamañja, son of the king's forefather, Sagara. Another minister of the king, Siddhārtha by name, who was present there, opposes Kaikeyī and urges that the analogy of Asamañja, who was a perverse lad, could not be applied in the case of Śrī Rāma, who possessed an ideal character and deserved in every way to be installed in the office of Prince Regent. In the event of Kaikeyī vetoing the proposal the king threatens to accompany the heir-apparent.

ततः सुमन्त्रमैक्ष्वाकः पीडितोऽत्र प्रतिज्ञया । सबाष्पमतिनिःश्वस्य जगादेदं पुनर्वचः ॥ १ ॥
सूत रत्नसुसम्पूर्णा चतुर्विधबला चमूः । राघवस्यानुयात्रार्थं क्षिप्रं प्रतिविधीयताम् ॥ २ ॥
रूपाजीवाश्च वादिन्यो वणिजश्च महाधनाः । शोभयन्तु कुमारस्य वाहिनीः सुप्रसारिताः ॥ ३ ॥
ये चैनमुपजीवन्ति रमते यैश्च वीर्यतः । तेषां बहुविधं दत्त्वा तानप्यत्र नियोजय ॥ ४ ॥
आयुधानि च मुख्यानि नागराः शकटानि च । अनुगच्छन्तु काकुत्स्थं व्याधाश्चारण्यकोविदाः ॥ ५ ॥
निघ्नन् मृगान् कुञ्जरांश्च पिबंश्चारण्यकं मधु । नदीश्च विविधाः पश्यन् न राज्यं संस्मरिष्यति ॥ ६ ॥
धान्यकोशश्च यः कश्चिद् धनकोशश्च मामकः । तौ राममनुगच्छेतां वसन्तं निर्जने वने ॥ ७ ॥
यजन् पुण्येषु देशेषु विसृजंश्चाप्तदक्षिणाः । ऋषिभिश्चापि संगम्य प्रवत्स्यति सुखं वने ॥ ८ ॥
भरतश्च महाबाहुरयोध्यां पालयिष्यति । सर्वकामैः पुनः श्रीमान् रामः संसाध्यतामिति ॥ ९ ॥

Sighing deeply with tears (in his eyes), Daśaratha (a scion of Ikṣwāku), who was bound by the pledge (given by him to Kaikeyī) in the matter of sending Śrī Rāma into exile, then spoke to Sumantra again as follows:—(1) "Let a detachment consisting of (all) the four limbs of the army and richly provided with jewels be detailed at once to accompany Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), O Sumantra! (2) Nay, let courtezans adept in speaking, as well as merchants possessing enormous wealth and clever in efficiently spreading a network of shops (dealing in provisions and other goods) lend charm to the forces accompanying the prince. (3) Further tell off in his service those (wrestlers) too who depend on him and in whom he takes delight by testing their (comparative) strength, bestowing various gifts on them. (4) Let the principal weapons, courteous and well-bred men and bullock-carts too as well as hunters knowing the secrets of forests accompany Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha). (5) Killing the deer and elephants and drinking wild honey and seeing various rivers he would not miss his sovereignty. (6) Let that which constitutes my granary and that which comprises my exchequer both accompany Rāma going to dwell in an uninhabited forest. (7) Performing sacrifices in holy regions and bestowing adequate gifts (on the officiating priests) and meeting sages too he will live away happily in the forest. (8) And the mighty-armed Bharata will rule over Ayodhya. Let the glorious Rāma, therefore, be sent out with all objects of enjoyment." (9)

एवं ब्रुवति काकुत्स्थे कैकेय्या भयमागतम् । मुखं चाप्यगमच्छोषं स्वरश्चापि व्यरुध्यत ॥१०॥
सा विषण्णा च संत्रस्ता मुखेन परिशुष्यता । राजानमेवाभिमुखी कैकेयी वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥११॥
राज्यं गतधनं साधो पीतमण्डां सुरामिव । निरास्वाद्यतमं शून्यं भरतो नाभिपत्स्यते ॥१२॥
कैकेय्यां मुक्तलज्जायां वदन्त्यामतिदारुणम् । राजा दशरथो वाक्यमुवाचायतलोचनाम् ॥१३॥
वहन्तं किं तुदसि मां नियुज्य धुरि माहिते । अनार्ये कृत्यमारब्धं किं न पूर्वमुपारुधः ॥१४॥
तस्यैतत् क्रोधसंयुक्तमुक्तं श्रुत्वा वराङ्गना । कैकेयी द्विगुणं क्रुद्धा राजानमिदमब्रवीत् ॥१५॥
तवैव वंशे सगरो ज्येष्ठपुत्रमुपारुधत् । असमञ्ज इति ख्यातं तथायं गन्तुमर्हति ॥१६॥
एवमुक्तो धिगित्येव राजा दशरथोऽब्रवीत् । व्रीडितश्च जनः सर्वः सा च तन्नावबुध्यत ॥१७॥
तत्र वृद्धो महामात्रः सिद्धार्थो नाम नामतः । शुचिर्बहुमतो राज्ञः कैकेयीमिदमब्रवीत् ॥१८॥

While Daśaratha (a scion of Kakutstha) was speaking as aforesaid, fear seized Kaikeyī. Nay, her mouth too got parched and voice as well got choked. (10) Feeling dejected and dismayed, with her mouth getting parched, and her face turned exclusively towards the king, she replied as follows:—11) "Bharata will not accept a kingdom that has been stripped of its wealth and resembles wine divested of its spirituous part, and which is (thus) absolutely unenjoyable and unsubstantial, O pious soul!" (12) When Kaikeyī, who was thus shamelessly uttering most cruel words, King Daśaratha spoke (as follows) to that lady with large eyes:—(13) "Having charged me with a burden (*viz*, that of sending Rāma into exile, which is so hard to bear), O hostile and vulgar woman, why do you lash me while I am carrying it? Why did you not check before (while asking the two boons, by laying down that Rāma should not be allowed to take any thing with him) the proceedings (now) taken in hand (of sending troops etc. with Rāma)?" (14) Doubly incensed to hear this angry question of Daśaratha, Kaikeyī, the lovely women, replied to the king as follows:—(15) "In your very dynasty Emperor Sagara cast away his eldest son known by the name of Asamañja. Rāma (too) should depart likewise (without anything to depend upon)." (16) Spoken to as above, King Daśaratha simply said, "Shame !" Everyone (present there) too felt ashamed. She, however, did not mind it. (17) On that occasion the aged and upright chief minister, Siddhārtha by name, who was highly esteemed by the king, spoke to Kaikeyī as follows: so the tradition goes :—(18)

असमञ्जो गृहीत्वा तु क्रीडतः पथि दारकान् । सरय्वां प्रक्षिपन्नप्सु रमते तेन दुर्मतिः ॥१९॥
तं दृष्ट्वा नागराः सर्वे क्रुद्धा राजानमब्रुवन् । असमञ्जं वृणीष्वैकमस्मान् वा राष्ट्रवर्धन ॥२०॥
तानुवाच ततो राजा किंनिमित्तमिदं भयम् । ताश्चापि राज्ञा सम्पृष्टा वाक्यं प्रकृतयोऽब्रुवन् ॥२१॥
क्रीडतस्त्वेष नः पुत्रान् बालानुद्भ्रान्तचेतसः । सरय्वां प्रक्षिपन्मौर्ख्यादतुलां प्रीतिमश्नुते ॥२२॥
स तासां वचनं श्रुत्वा प्रकृतीनां नराधिपः । तं तत्याजाहितं पुत्रं तासां प्रियचिकीर्षया ॥२३॥
तं यानं शीघ्रमारोप्य सभार्यं सपरिच्छदम् । यावज्जीवं विवास्योऽयमिति तानन्वशात् पिता ॥२४॥
स फालपिटकं गृह्य गिरिदुर्गाण्यलोकयत् । दिशः सर्वास्त्वनुचरन् स यथा पापकर्मकृत् ॥२५॥
इत्येनमत्यजद् राजा सगरो वै सुधार्मिकः । रामः किमकरोत् पापं येनैवमुपरुध्यते ॥२६॥
नहि कंचन पश्यामो राघवस्यागुणं वयम् । दुर्लभो ह्यस्य निरयः शशाङ्कस्येव कल्मषम् ॥२७॥
अथवा देवि त्वं कंचिद् दोषं पश्यसि राघवे । तमद्य ब्रूहि तत्त्वेन तदा रामो विवास्यते ॥२८॥
अदुष्टस्य हि संत्यागः सत्पथे निरतस्य च । निर्दहेदपि शक्रस्य द्युतिं धर्मविरोधवान् ॥२९॥
तदलं देवि रामस्य श्रिया विहतया त्वया । लोकतोऽपि हि ते रक्ष्यः परिवादः शुभानने ॥३०॥

"Catching hold of children playing in the street, Asamañja just used to throw them in the waters of the Sarayu and the evil-minded fellow took delight in it. (19) Enraged to see that (murderous prank of the Crown prince), all the citizens submitted to the king, 'Keep (to yourself) Asamañja alone (allowing us to leave the city) or preserve us (sending away the prince), O promoter of the State ! (20) Thereupon the king said to them, 'What is the occasion for this fear ?' Duly interrogated by the king, those people too replied to the king. (21) 'He experiences incomparable joy while throwing through folly in the Sarayu our juvenile sons playing in an excited state of mind !' (22) Hearing the complaint of those people, the said king abandoned his son, malevolent to his subjects, with intent to oblige them. (23) Quickly placing him along with his wife and accessories (*viz*, a spade, basket and so on, necessary adjuncts to a forest life), he instructed those in authority in the following words:—'He should be exiled for life.' (24) Taking a basket and a spade and roaming about in all directions (in search of roots and fruits etc.), he ransacked mountain passes (in quest of an abode). The highly pious King Sagara obviously abandoned Asamañja on the plea of his perpetrating sinful deeds as mentioned above. What sin has Śrī Rāma committed, for which he is being debarred from the throne in this way ? (25-26) Surely we do not detect any fault in Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). It is as difficult to find a taint in him as in the new moon. (27) Or if you perceive any fault in Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), O queen, (please) point it out correctly today. Then Śrī Rāma will be sent into exile. (28) Indeed it is repugnant to (all canons of) righteousness to abandon one who is not only not guilty but also devoted to the straight path. It would destroy the splendour even of Indra (the ruler of gods). (29) Therefore, O queen, it is no use your withholding the royal fortune of Śrī Rāma. Censure coming from the public too should be guarded against by you, O lady with a charming countenance !" (30)

श्रुत्वा तु सिद्धार्थवचो राजा श्रान्ततरस्वरः । शोकोपहतया वाचा कैकेयीमिदमब्रवीत् ॥३१॥
एतद्वचो नेच्छसि पापरूपे हितं न जानासि ममात्मनोऽथवा ।
आस्थाय मार्गं कृपणं कुचेष्टा चेष्टा हि ते साधुपथादपेता ॥३२॥
अनुव्रजिष्याम्यहमद्य रामं राज्यं परित्यज्य सुखं धनं च ।
सर्वे च राज्ञा भरतेन च त्वं यथासुखं भुङ्क्ष्व चिराय राज्यम् ॥३३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये मादिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षट्त्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३६ ॥

Hearing the remonstrance of Siddhārtha, the king, for his part, whose voice had grown very feeble, spoke as follows to Kaikeyī in a tone suppressed with grief :—(31) "Do you not like this advice, O embodiment of sin ? Having taken to a path leading to woe, are you not alive to my interests or your own ? Indeed your gesture is remote from the path of the righteous and as such an undesirable one. (32) Abandoning the kingly state, (bodily) comfort and wealth I shall follow Rāma (to the forest) today as also all the people (of Ayodhya). Rule you the kingdom happily for long with Bharata (on this side)." (33)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-six in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तत्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXVII

Śrī Rama urges his servants to fetch the bark of trees for being used as his wearing apparel. At this Kaikeyī herself brings them the desired dress, which both Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa cover themselves with, taking off their princely robes. Sītā, however, finds it difficult to wear the bark supplied to her and ultimately puts it on over her own dress with the help of Śrī Rāma despite the remonstrances of Vasiṣṭha, who severely castigates Kaikeyī for her cruelty in exiling them.

महामात्रवचः श्रुत्वा रामो दशरथं तदा । अभ्यभाषत वाक्यं तु विनयज्ञो विनीतवत् ॥ १ ॥
त्यक्तभोगस्य मे राजन् वने वन्येन जीवतः । किं कार्यमनुयात्रेण त्यक्तसङ्गस्य सर्वतः ॥ २ ॥
यो हि दत्त्वा द्विपश्रेष्ठं कक्ष्यायां कुरुते मनः । रज्जुस्नेहेन किं तस्य त्यजतः कुञ्जरोत्तमम् ॥ ३ ॥
तथा मम सतां श्रेष्ठ किं ध्वजिन्या जगत्पते । सर्वाण्येवानुजानामि चीराण्येवानयन्तु मे ॥ ४ ॥
खनित्रपिटके चोभे समानयत गच्छत । चतुर्दश वने वासं वर्षाणि वसतो मम ॥ ५ ॥
अथ चीराणि कैकेयी स्वयमाहृत्य राघवम् । उवाच परिधत्स्वेति जनौघे निरपत्रपा ॥ ६ ॥

स चीरे पुरुषव्याघ्रः कैकेय्याः प्रतिगृह्य ते । सूक्ष्मवस्त्रमवक्षिप्य मुनिवस्त्राण्यवस्त ह ॥ ७ ॥
लक्ष्मणश्चापि तत्रैव विहाय वसने शुभे । तापसाच्छादने चैव जग्राह पितुरग्रतः ॥ ८ ॥

Hearing the remonstrance of the chief minister, Śrī Rāma, for his part, who was an adept in courtesy, politely addressed on that occasion the following words to Daśaratha :— (1) "What purpose of mine, who have renounced (all) enjoyment and shaken off attachment for everything and am going to live on the products of the forest (alone), will be served, O king, with an army following me ? (2) He who, having parted with an excellent elephant, seeks to retain the tether is indeed a fool. What is to be gained through attachment to a tether by him who has forgone an excellent elephant ? (3) Similarly, O jewel among the virtuous, what purpose of mine will be served with an army, O ruler of the world ? I (therefore) allow all things to be used by Bharata. Let the servant-maids of mother Kaikeyī bring me robes fit for a dweller in forests alone. (4) (Addressing the maid-servants he continues,) go and duly bring a spade and a basket both for me, who am going to take up my abode in a forest for fourteen years." (5) Personally bringing pieces of bark (for being put on by Śrī Rāma and others), Kaikeyī, who was lost to (all) shame, forthwith said to Śrī Rāma in the midst of that concourse of men, "Put these on !" (6) Receiving from Kaikeyī two pieces of bark (for being used as a loin-cloth and a cover respectively) and discarding his raiment of fine yarn, that tiger among men put on the garb of ascetics: so the tradition goes. (7) Nay, leaving his exquisite robes on that very spot, Lakṣmaṇa too put on in the presence of his father two pieces of bark fit for ascetics. (8)

अथात्मपरिधानार्थं सीता कौशेयवासिनी । सम्प्रेक्ष्य चीरं संत्रस्ता पृषती वागुरामिव ॥ ९ ॥
सा व्यपत्रपमाणेव प्रगृह्य च सुदुर्मनाः । कैकेय्याः कुशचीरे ते जानकी शुभलक्षणा ॥१०॥
अश्रुसम्पूर्णनेत्रा च धर्मज्ञा धर्मदर्शिनी । गन्धर्वराजप्रतिमं भर्तारमिदमब्रवीत् ॥११॥
कथं नु चीरं बध्नन्ति मुनयो वनवासिनः । इति ह्यकुशला सीता सा मुमोह मुहुर्मुहुः ॥१२॥
कृत्वा कण्ठे स्म सा चीरमेकमादाय पाणिना । तस्थौ ह्यकुशला तत्र व्रीडिता जनकात्मजा ॥१३॥
तस्यास्तत् क्षिप्रमागत्य रामो धर्मभृतां वरः । चीरं बबन्ध सीतायाः कौशेयस्योपरि स्वयम् ॥१४॥
रामं प्रेक्ष्य तु सीताया बध्नन्तं चीरमुत्तमम् । अन्तःपुरचरा नार्यो मुमुचुर्वारि नेत्रजम् ॥१५॥
ऊचुश्च परमायत्ता रामं ज्वलिततेजसम् । वत्स नैवं नियुक्तेयं वनवासे मनस्विनी ॥१६॥
पितुर्वाक्यानुरोधेन गतस्य विजनं वनम् । तावद् दर्शनमस्या नः सफलं भवतु प्रभो ॥१७॥
लक्ष्मणेन सहायेन वनं गच्छस्व पुत्रक । नेयमर्हति कल्याणी वस्तुं तापसवद् वने ॥१८॥
कुरु नो याचनां पुत्र सीता तिष्ठतु भामिनी । धर्मनित्यः स्वयं स्थातुं न हीदानीं त्वमिच्छसि ॥१९॥
तासामेवंविधा वाचः शृण्वन् दशरथात्मजः । बबन्धैव तथा चीरं सीतया तुल्यशीलया ॥२०॥
चीरे गृहीते तु तया सबाष्पो नृपतेर्गुरुः । निवार्य सीतां कैकेयीं वसिष्ठो वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥२१॥

Gazing with reverence on the piece of bark intended for being donned by her, Sītā, who was clad in silken robes, felt dismayed as a doe would on seeing a snare (set for entrapping it). (9) Feeling much abashed as it were while taking from (the hand of) Kaikeyī the two articles of wearing apparel made of Kuśa grass and greatly troubled in mind, Sītā (daughter of Janaka), who was endowed with auspicious bodily marks, knew what is right and served as an illustration of virtue, spoke as follows, her eyes overflowing with tears, to her husband, who vied with Chitraratha (the ruler of the Gandharvas) :—(10-11) "I wonder how ascetics dwelling in forests put on the bark of trees." Saying so, the celebrated Sītā, who was in no way adept in wearing the bark of trees, erred again and again (in her attempt to do so). (12) Placing one piece about her neck and taking another in her hand, the said daughter of Janaka stood abashed, inefficient as she was (in wearing the bark). (13) Quickly going near her, Śrī Rāma, the foremost of those upholding the cause of virtue, then personally fastened the bark over her silken garment. (14) Perceiving Śrī Rāma fastening the excellent bark about Sītā, the female inmates of the gynaeceum began to shed tears and, sore distressed (as they were , spoke (as follows) to Śrī Rāma of dazzling glory :—"This high-minded princess has not been so commanded to reside in the forest (as you), dear child ! (15-16) (At least) let her (blessed) sight (continue to) bring its reward to us during the interim period when you have departed to the lonely forest in obedience to your father's command, O lord ! (17) Proceed to the forest, dear son, with Lakṣmaṇa (alone) as your companion. This blessed princess does not deserve to dwell in the forest like an ascetic. (18) Grant our solicitation, O darling ! Let Sītā, the pretty young lady, (continue to) stay (in Ayodhya) though surely you are not personally inclined to stay any longer, righteousness being your eternal companion." (19) (Even though) hearing such (loving) remonstrances of those women, Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha) persisted in fastening the bark (over her silken garment) as aforesaid (vide verse 14) as desired by Sītā, whose conduct came into line with his own. (20) Stopping Sītā when the bark was taken by her (from the hands of Kaikeyī), Sage Vasiṣṭha, the king's preceptor, for his part, spoke to Kaikeyī with tears (in his eyes) as follows :— (21)

अतिप्रवृत्ते दुर्मेधे कैकेयि कुलपांसनि । वञ्चयित्वा तु राजानं न प्रमाणेऽवतिष्ठसि ॥२२॥
न गन्तव्यं वनं देव्या सीतया शीलवर्जिते । अनुष्ठास्यति रामस्य सीता प्रकृतमासनम् ॥२३॥
आत्मा हि दाराः सर्वेषां दारसंग्रहवर्तिनाम् । आत्मेयमिति रामस्य पालयिष्यति मेदिनीम् ॥२४॥
अथ यास्यति वैदेही वनं रामेण संगता । वयमत्रानुयास्यामः पुरं चेदं गमिष्यति ॥२५॥
अन्तपालाश्च यास्यन्ति सदारो यत्र राघवः । सहोपजीव्यं राष्ट्रं च पुरं च सपरिच्छदम् ॥२६॥
भरतश्च सशत्रुघ्नश्चीरवासा वनेचरः । वने वसन्तं काकुत्स्थमनुवत्स्यति पूर्वजम् ॥२७॥
ततः शून्यां गतजनां वसुधां पादपैः सह । त्वमेका शाधि दुर्वृत्ता प्रजानामहिते स्थिता ॥२८॥
न हि तद् भविता राष्ट्रं यत्र रामो न भूपतिः । तद् वनं भविता राष्ट्रं यत्र रामो निवत्स्यति ॥२९॥

"Having hoodwinked the king, O evil-minded Kaikeyī, who have exceeded your limits and brought disgrace to your family, you do not keep within bounds yet ! (22) O woman dead to (all) decorum, Princess Sītā shall not proceed to the forest. She will occupy the throne which was offered to Rāma. (23) A wife is the very self to all householders. As the (other) self of Rāma she will rule over the globe. (24) If Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory) retires to the forest along with Rāma we who are present here (at this moment) shall follow suit and (the people of) this city (too) will go. (25) The soldiers guarding the gynaeceum too will go where Rāma (a scion of Raghu) stays with his wife. Nay, the (entire) state (of Kosala) including (all) its resources as well as the city (of Ayodhya) with its goods and chattels will (also) go. (26) Clad in the bark of trees and dwelling in a forest, Bharata too with Śatrughna will adopt the mode of life of his elder brother, Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), living in the forest. (27) Rule you alone after that the desolate earth, deserted by men, with its trees (because it will be reduced to a mere forest), vile as you are and bent upon doing harm to the people. (28) The state in which Rāma is no longer the king will not survive; while the forest which Rāma is going to inhabit is sure to develop into a (flourishing) state. (29)

न ह्यदत्तां महीं पित्रा भरतः शास्तुमिच्छति । त्वयि वा पुत्रवद् वस्तुं यदि जातो महीपतेः ॥३०॥
यद्यपि त्वं क्षितितलाद् गगनं चोत्पतिष्यसि । पितृवंशचरित्रज्ञः सोऽन्यथा न करिष्यति ॥३१॥
तत् त्वया पुत्रगर्धिन्या पुत्रस्य कृतमप्रियम् । लोके नहि स विद्येत यो न राममनुव्रतः ॥३२॥
द्रक्ष्यस्यद्यैव कैकेयि पशुव्यालमृगद्विजान् । गच्छतः सह रामेण पादपांश्च तदुन्मुखान् ॥३३॥
अथोत्तमान्याभरणानि देवि देहि स्नुषायै व्यपनीय चीरम् ।
न चीरमस्याः प्रविधीयतेति न्यवारयत् तद्वसनं वसिष्ठः ॥३४॥
एकस्य रामस्य वने निवासस्त्वया वृतः केकयराजपुत्रि ।
विभूषितेयं प्रतिकर्मनित्या वसत्वरण्ये सह राघवेण ॥३५॥
यानैश्च मुख्यैः परिचारकैश्च सुसंवृता गच्छतु राजपुत्री ।
वस्त्रैश्च सर्वैः सहितैर्विधानैर्नेयं वृता ते वरसम्प्रदाने ॥३६॥
तस्मिंस्तथा जल्पति विप्रमुख्ये गुरौ नृपस्याप्रतिमप्रभावे ।
नैव स्म सीता विनिवृत्तभावा प्रियस्य भर्तुः प्रतिकारकामा ॥३७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्तत्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३७ ॥

"Bharata surely would not rule over the earth which has not been (voluntarily) alienated by his father, nor would he live with you as a son if he is sprung from the loins of the emperor. (30) Even if you soar into the heavens leaving the earth's surface, he would not do anything contrary to the established usage, knowing as he does the practice of his forbears. (31) Therefore an unfriendly act (alone) has been done by you to your son, even though you covet his well-being; for there is none in the world who is not devoted to Rāma. (32) O Kaikeyī, you will see this very day beasts, snakes, deer and birds going with Rāma (to the forest) and trees (too) eager to accompany him. (33) Therefore, laying aside the bark of trees, give your daughter-in-law excellent jewels, O queen! The bark of trees is not meant for her." Saying so, Vasiṣṭha forbade her wearing it. (34) The sage continued, "The sojourn in the forest of Rāma alone has been asked for by you, O princess of the Kekaya territory! (Hence) let Sītā, who deserves to be decorated daily, dwell in the forest with Rāma (a scion of Raghu) richly adorned. (35) Nay, let the princess proceed fully provided with excellent conveyances and attendants as well as with costumes (of various kinds) and all useful accessories; (for) while asking for the boons her exile was not solicited by you." (36) Even though the said preceptor of the king, the foremost among the Brahmans, who wielded an influence which had no parallel, spoke as above, Sītā, who wished to follow the way of her husband, did not desist from her purpose in the least. (37)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-seven in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टात्रिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXVIII

Incensed to hear the loud wailing of those present at the scene on Sītā being dressed as a hermitess, Daśaratha reproaches Kaikeyī. While departing, Śrī Rāma entreats his father to take care of his mother.

तस्यां चीरं वसानायां नाथवत्यामनाथवत् । प्रचुक्रोश जनः सर्वो धिक् त्वां दशरथं त्विति ॥ १ ॥
तेन तत्र प्रणादेन दुःखितः स महीपतिः । चिच्छेद जीविते श्रद्धां धर्मे यशसि चात्मनः ॥ २ ॥
स निःश्वस्योष्णमैक्ष्वाकस्तां भार्यामिदमब्रवीत् । कैकेयि कुशचीरेण न सीता गन्तुमर्हति ॥ ३ ॥
सुकुमारी च बाला च सततं च सुखोचिता । नेयं वनस्य योग्येति सत्यमाह गुरुर्मम ॥ ४ ॥
इयं हि कस्यापि करोति किंचित् तपस्विनी राजवरस्य पुत्री ।
या चीरमासाद्य जनस्य मध्ये स्थिता विसंज्ञा श्रमणीव काचित् ॥ ५ ॥
चीराण्यपास्याज्जनकस्य कन्या नेयं प्रतिज्ञा मम दत्तपूर्वा ।
यथासुखं गच्छतु राजपुत्री वनं समग्रा सह सर्वरत्नैः ॥ ६ ॥
अजीवनार्हेण मया नृशंसा कृता प्रतिज्ञा नियमेन तावत् ।
त्वया हि बाल्यात् प्रतिपन्नमेतत् तन्मा दहेद् वेणुमिवात्मपुष्पम् ॥ ७ ॥

On Sītā wearing the bark of trees like a helpless woman though protected by her husband, all the people (present there) loudly exclaimed, "Fie upon you, (the powerless) Daśaratha (who does not stop this flagrant injustice) !" (1) Pained to hear that loud cry, the said emperor lost (all) his interest in life, religious merit and renown. (2) Heaving a sigh of grief, that scion of Ikṣwāku spoke to his wife (Kaikeyī) as follows:—"Sītā (surely) does not deserve to depart in a robe made of Kuśa grass, O Kaikeyī ! (3) My teacher truly says that delicate (of body), young and ever used to amenities of life as she is, she is not fit for residence in a forest. (4) Has this innocent daughter of Janaka (a jewel among kings) really done any injury to anyone whomsoever that, having received a robe of bark she stands dumbfounded like an ordinary hermitess in the midst of men ? (5) Let Sītā (the daughter of Janaka) shed her robes of bark. No such pledge (that she would accompany her husband in robes of bark) was given by me in the past. Let the princess (therefore) proceed at pleasure to the forest fully equipped (with clothes and ornaments) and provided with all valuable possessions. (6) In the first place a cruel promise was made on oath by me, who no longer deserve to survive; on top of it this (unjust) act (of providing the robes of a hermitess to Sītā) has been initiated by you through (sheer) childishness. That is sure to consume me (even) as the blossoming of a bamboo brings about its own destruction. (7)

रामेण यदि ते पापे किंचित् कृतमशोभनम् । अपकारः क इह ते वैदेह्या दर्शितोऽधमे ॥ ८ ॥
मृगीवोत्फुल्लनयना मृदुशीला मनस्विनी । अपकारं कमिव ते करोति जनकात्मजा ॥ ९ ॥
ननु पर्याप्तमेवं ते पापे रामविवासनम् । किमेभिः कृपणैर्भूयः पातकैरपि ते कृतैः ॥१०॥
प्रतिज्ञातं मया तावत् त्वयोक्तं देवि शृण्वता । रामं यदभिषेकाय त्वमिहागतमब्रवीः ॥११॥
तत् त्वेतत् समतिक्रम्य निरयं गन्तुमिच्छसि । मैथिलीमपि या हि त्वमीक्षसे चीरवासिनीम् ॥१२॥

"(Even) supposing some offence was given to you by Rāma, what wrong on earth was done to you by Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory), O vile woman ? (8) What injury on earth could the lofty-minded Sītā (the daughter of Janaka) do to you—Sītā, who is distinguished by a pair of blooming eyes like a female gazelle and is possessed of a mild disposition ? (9) Indeed sending Rāma into exile (in the robes of a hermit), as you are doing, O sinful woman, is enough for you. What more do you seek to gain through these (further) sins (in the shape of exiling Sītā and that too in the robes of a hermitess) which are going to be perpetrated by you and which are calculated to land you in untold suffering ? (10) Hearing your command*, which you gave to Rāma, who called here (the other day) in connection with his installation (as Prince Regent), O queen, that much was (silently) acquiesced in by me. (11) Distinctly going beyond that, however, as you are doing now, you seek to go to hell in that you would have Sītā (a princess of Mithilā) too clad in the bark of trees." (12)

एवं ब्रुवन्तं पितरं रामः सम्प्रस्थितो वनम् । अवाक्शिरसमासीनमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१३॥
इयं धार्मिक कौसल्या मम माता यशस्विनी । वृद्धा चाक्षुद्रशीला च न च त्वां देव गर्हते ॥१४॥
मया विहीनां वरद प्रपन्नां शोकसागरम् । अदृष्टपूर्वव्यसनां भूयः सम्मन्तुमर्हसि ॥१५॥
पुत्रशोकं यथा नर्च्छेत् त्वया पूज्येन पूजिता । मां हि सोचन्तयन्ती सा त्वयि जीवेत् तपस्विनी ॥१६॥
इमां महेन्द्रोपम जातगर्धिनीं तथा विधातुं जननीं ममार्हसि ।
यथा वनस्थे मयि शोककर्शिता न जीवितं न्यस्य यमक्षयं व्रजेत् ॥१७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टात्रिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३८ ॥

To his father, who sat with his head bent low, while speaking as aforesaid, Śrī Rāma, who was (now) actually on his way to the forest, submitted as follows :—(13) "This illustrious mother of mine, Kausalyā, has not only grown old but is of a generous disposition too and never speaks ill of you, O pious monarch ! (14) When she is bereft of me and (consequently) drowned in a sea of grief, although she has known no suffering before, O bestower of boons, you ought to show greater regard to her, so that the poor lady may not fall a prey to grief caused by separation from me (her son) and, treated with respect by you, who are worthy of adoration (to her), and contemplating on me, may survive under your care. (15-16) Kindly handle my mother, who is sure to pine for me (her son), in such a way, O compeer of the mighty Indra (the lord of paradise), as to ensure that, stricken with grief, when I am sojourning in the forest, she may not depart to the abode of Yama (the god of death), giving up the ghost. (17)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-eight in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

---

* *Vide* II. xviii. 37 on p. 309 above.

एकोनचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XXXIX

Sent away by Daśaratha, Sumantra gets a chariot ready to take Śrī Rāma and his party to the forest and Sītā adorns herself with jewels brought by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Kausalyā tenders opportune advice to her daughter-in-law and the latter bows to it. Śrī Rāma comforts Kausalyā and offers apology to his other mothers, who burst into a wail.

रामस्य तु वचः श्रुत्वा मुनिवेषधरं च तम्। समीक्ष्य सह भार्याभी राजा विगतचेतनः ॥ १ ॥
नैनं दुःखेन संतप्तः प्रत्यवैक्षत राघवम्। न चैनमभिसम्प्रेक्ष्य प्रत्यभाषत दुर्मनाः ॥ २ ॥
स मुहूर्तमिवासंज्ञो दुःखितश्च महीपतिः। विललाप महाबाहू राममेवानुचिन्तयन् ॥ ३ ॥
मन्ये खलु मया पूर्वं विवत्सा बहवः कृताः। प्राणिनो हिंसिता वापि तन्मामिदमुपस्थितम् ॥ ४ ॥
न त्वेवानागते काले देहाच्च्यवति जीवितम्। कैकेय्या क्लिश्यमानस्य मृत्युर्मम न विद्यते ॥ ५ ॥
योऽहं पावकसंकाशं पश्यामि पुरतः स्थितम्। विहाय वसने सूक्ष्मे तापसाच्छादमात्मजम् ॥ ६ ॥
एकस्याः खलु कैकेय्याः कृतेऽयं खिद्यते जनः। स्वार्थे प्रयतमानायाः संश्रित्य निकृतिं त्विमाम् ॥ ७ ॥

Hearing the intercession of Śrī Rāma and perceiving him clad in the garb of a hermit, the king for his part with his consorts fell unconscious. (1) Sore stricken with agony he could neither regale his eyes on Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) nor could he accost him even on casting a look at him awhile, disconsolate as he was. (2) Remaining senseless as it were for an hour or so and feeling distressed, the mighty-armed monarch repented in various ways (as follows), thinking all the time of Śrī Rāma alone:—(3) "I think in my past life many a cow indeed was robbed of its calf or in any case many living beings were destroyed by me. Hence this (calamity) has befallen me. (4) Surely life does not depart from the body until the (appointed) hour has arrived. (It is therefore that) death does not claim me even though I am being tormented by Kaikeyī and even though I behold my son, effulgent as fire, standing before me clad in the robes of an ascetic, having shed garments of fine fabric. (5-6) Indeed (all) these people have to suffer on account of Kaikeyī alone, who, having resorted to this roguery, is striving hard to gain her object." (7)

एवमुक्त्वा तु वचनं बाष्पेण विहतेन्द्रियः । रामेति सकृदेवोक्त्वा व्याहर्तुं न शशाक सः ॥ ८ ॥
संज्ञां तु प्रतिलभ्यैव मुहूर्तात् स महीपतिः । नेत्राभ्यामश्रुपूर्णाभ्यां सुमन्त्रमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ९ ॥

Having uttered these words and saying "O Rāma !" only once, the emperor, however, whose vocal organs had been choked by tears, could not speak any more. Just regaining his consciousness after an hour or so the said emperor for his part spoke to Sumantra with his eyes flooded with tears as follows:—(8-9)

औपवाह्यं रथं युक्त्वा त्वमायाहि हयोत्तमैः । प्रापयैनं महाभागमितो जनपदात् परम् ॥१०॥
एवं मन्ये गुणवतां गुणानां फलमुच्यते । पित्रा मात्रा च यत्साधुर्वीरो निर्वास्यते वनम् ॥११॥
राज्ञो वचनमाज्ञाय सुमन्त्रः शीघ्रविक्रमः । योजयित्वा ययौ तत्र रथमश्वैरलंकृतम् ॥१२॥
तं रथं राजपुत्राय सूतः कनकभूषितम् । आचचक्षेऽञ्जलिं कृत्वा युक्तं परमवाजिभिः ॥१३॥
राजा सत्वरमाहूय व्यापृतं वित्तसंचये । उवाच देशकालज्ञो निश्चितं सर्वतः शुचिः ॥१४॥
वासांसि च वरार्हाणि भूषणानि महान्ति च । वर्षाण्येतानि संख्याय वैदेह्याः क्षिप्रमानय ॥१५॥
नरेन्द्रेणैवमुक्तस्तु गत्वा कोशगृहं ततः । प्रायच्छत् सर्वमाहृत्य सीतायै क्षिप्रमेव तत् ॥१६॥

"Fitting with the best of horses a chariot used for pleasure-drives, return you (soon) and take this highly blessed prince beyond this territory. (10) Since a pious and valiant son is being exiled to the forest by his (very) father and mother, such I believe is declared (by the scriptures) to be the reward of virtues of the virtuous." (11) Bowing to the king's command and fitting with horses a chariot decked with ornaments, Sumantra, who was swift of pace, returned (quickly) to that (very) spot (where Śrī Rāma stood ready with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa to depart for the forest). (12) Joining his palms (as a token of submission), the charioteer announced to the Crown prince (Śrī Rāma) the arrival of that chariot, decked with gold and fitted with excellent horses. (13) Promptly summoning (to his presence) the officer placed in charge of the treasury, the king, who knew what should be done at a particular place and time and was free from all impurities (in the shape of duplicity etc.), spoke in a decisive tone (as follows):—(14) "Taking into consideration (all) these years (that Sītā has to spend in exile), (pray) speedily bring for Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) costly robes and valuable ornaments." (15) Proceeding to the treasury when commanded thus by the king, and bringing everything (that he was instructed to fetch), the officer for his part immediately delivered the (whole) lot to Sītā. (16)

सा सुजाता सुजातानि वैदेही प्रस्थिता वनम् । भूषयामास गात्राणि तैर्विचित्रैर्विभूषणैः ॥१७॥
व्यराजयत वैदेही वेश्म तत् सुविभूषिता । उद्यतोंऽशुमतः काले खं प्रभेव विवस्वतः ॥१८॥
तां भुजाभ्यां परिष्वज्य श्वश्रूर्वचनमब्रवीत् । अनाचरन्तीं कृपणं मूर्ध्न्युपाघ्राय मैथिलीम् ॥१९॥

Bound as she was for the forest, Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom), of noble (uncommon) birth (in that she was not born from a womb), adorned her limbs, which were endowed with propitious marks, with those marvellous jewels. (17) Splendidly and profusely decked (with ornaments) Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) illumined that palace (where she stood) in the same way as the radiance of the rising sun with its bright rays illumines the sky in the morning (particularly when there is no mist or cloud). (18) Folding in her arms that princess of Mithilā, who never behaved in an unseemly way, and smelling her head (as a token of affection), her mother-in-law (Kausalyā) spoke in the following words :—(19)

असत्यः सर्वलोकेऽस्मिन् सततं सत्कृताः प्रियैः । भर्तारं नानुमन्यन्ते विनिपातगतं स्त्रियः ॥२०॥
एष स्वभावो नारीणामनुभूय पुरा सुखम् । अल्पामप्यापदं प्राप्य दुष्यन्ति प्रजहत्यपि ॥२१॥
असत्यशीला विकृता दुर्गा अहृदयाः सदा । असत्यः पापसंकल्पाः क्षणमात्रविरागिणः ॥२२॥
न कुलं न कृतं विद्या न दत्तं नापि संग्रहः । स्त्रीणां गृह्णाति हृदयमनित्यहृदया हि ताः ॥२३॥
साध्वीनां तु स्थितानां तु शीले सत्ये श्रुते स्थिते । स्त्रीणां पवित्रं परमं पतिरेको विशिष्यते ॥२४॥
स त्वया नावमन्तव्यः पुत्रः प्रव्राजितो वनम् । तव देवसमस्त्वेष निर्धनः सधनोऽपि वा ॥२५॥

"Women who, though constantly adored by their beloved consorts, cease to esteem their husband who has fallen on evil days are dubbed as wicked throughout this world. (20) Having enjoyed happiness in the past they malign and even desert their husband on meeting with the least misfortune : such is the nature of (wicked) women. (21) Wicked are those women who are ever untruthful by nature and swayed by passion, are difficult to comprehend, heartless and of sinful resolve and who get estranged in a moment. (22) Neither (noble) birth nor good turn, nor learning, nor gift nor even marriage ties capture the heart of (such) women, fickle of heart as they are. (23) In the case, however, of virtuous women, who are in fact devoted to good conduct, truthfulness and the precepts of their elders and keep within the bounds of decorum (laid down for their family), their husband is the most sacred object and he alone excels all. (24) Though (being) sent into exile to the forest, my son, Śrī Rāma, should not be despised by you. Endowed with means or resourceless, he is surely as good as a deity to you." (25)

विज्ञाय वचनं सीता तस्या धर्मार्थसंहितम् । कृत्वाञ्जलिमुवाचेदं श्वश्रूमभिमुखे स्थिता ॥२६॥
करिष्ये सर्वमेवाहमार्या यदनुशास्ति माम् । अभिज्ञास्मि यथा भर्तुर्वर्तितव्यं श्रुतं च मे ॥२७॥
न मामसज्जनेनार्या समानयितुमर्हति । धर्माद् विचलितुं नाहमलं चन्द्रादिव प्रभा ॥२८॥
नातन्त्री विद्यते वीणा नाचक्रो विद्यते रथः । नापतिः सुखमेधेत या स्यादपि शतात्मजा ॥२९॥
मितं ददाति हि पिता मितं भ्राता मितं सुतः । अमितस्य तु दातारं भर्तारं का न पूजयेत् ॥३०॥
साहमेवं गता श्रेष्ठा श्रुतधर्मपरावरा । आर्ये किमवमन्येयं स्त्रिया भर्ता हि दैवतम् ॥३१॥

Perceiving her advice to be in consonance with righteousness, which constituted her aim (in life), and joining her palms, Sītā replied to her mother-in-law as follows, standing in front of her :—(26) "I shall surely do all that your worthy self instructs me to do. I know how I should behave towards my husband and I have (also) heard about it (from my elders). (27) Your noble self ought not to equate me with wicked women.

I am unable to deviate from virtue (even) as moonlight is incapable of parting from the moon. (28) A Vina is of no use without chords and a chariot is of no use without wheels. Nor can a wife who is bereft of her husband prosper in a happy state even though she may have a hundred sons. (29) Indeed a father bestows limited joy, a brother (too) bestows limited joy and a son (as well) bestows limited happiness. What woman, then, would not adore her husband, the bestower of unlimited joy ? (30) Having heard about the special and ordinary duties of a wife from my superiors and thus convinced that the husband is a veritable deity to a (married) woman, how can I, such as I am, despise my husband, O venerable lady ?" (31)

सीताया वचनं श्रुत्वा कौसल्या हृदयंगमम् । शुद्धसत्त्वा मुमोचाश्रु सहसा दुःखहर्षजम् ॥३२॥
तां प्राञ्जलिरभिप्रेक्ष्य मातृमध्येऽतिसत्कृताम् । रामः परमधर्मात्मा मातरं वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥३३॥
अम्ब मा दुःखिता भूत्वा पश्येस्त्वं पितरं मम । क्षयोऽपि वनवासस्य क्षिप्रमेव भविष्यति ॥३४॥
सुप्तायास्ते गमिष्यन्ति नव वर्षाणि पञ्च च । समग्रमिह सम्प्राप्तं मां द्रक्ष्यसि सुहृद्वृतम् ॥३५॥
एतावदभिनीतार्थमुक्त्वा स जननीं वचः । त्रयःशतशतार्धा हि ददर्शावेक्ष्य मातरः ॥३६॥
ताश्चापि स तथैवार्ता मातॄर्दशरथात्मजः । धर्मयुक्तमिदं वाक्यं निजगाद कृताञ्जलिः ॥३७॥
संवासात् परुषं किंचिदज्ञानादपि यत् कृतम् । तन्मे समुपजानीत सर्वाश्चामन्त्रयामि वः ॥३८॥
वचनं राघवस्यैतद् धर्मयुक्तं समाहितम् । शुश्रुवुस्ताः स्त्रियः सर्वाः शोकोपहतचेतसः ॥३९॥

Hearing Sītā's reply, which touched (the chords of) her heart, Kausalyā of pure mind suddenly began to shed tears born of agony (at the thought of the impending separation from her sons and daughter-in-law) and delight (over the pious sentiments expressed by Sītā). (32) Gazing at Kausalyā (his own mother), who was highly respected among his mothers, Śrī Rāma, who had a supremely pious mind, spoke to her with joined palms as follows :— (33) "(Pray) do'nt you regard my father with a doleful countenance. The end of exile too will come rather soon. (34) Nine years and five will slip past you (even) while you are asleep. (One fine morning) you will find me duly arrived (back) here (in Ayodhya) in my entire being (along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa), surrounded by my friends and relations." (35) Having made the aforesaid comprehensive submission to his mother, and gazing on his three hundred and fifty stepmothers he actually found those mothers too distressed in the same way (as his own mother was). Nay, joining his palms the said son of Daśaratha (once more) made the following submission, which was in consonance with (the spirit of) righteousness :—(36-37) "(Pray) forgive whatever unkind word or even act may have been uttered or done by me through ignorance because we lived together. Now I take leave of you all." (38) All those (royal) ladies whose mind was agitated through grief, heard the aforesaid cool submission of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), which conformed to (the principles of) righteousness. (39)

जज्ञेऽथ तासां संनादः क्रौञ्चीनामिव निःस्वनः । मानवेन्द्रस्य भार्याणामेवं वदति राघवे ॥४०॥

मुरजपणवमेघघोषवद् दशरथवेश्म बभूव यत् पुरा ।
विलपितपरिदेवनाकुलं व्यसनगतं तदभूत् सुदुःखितम् ॥४१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकोनचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ३९ ॥

While Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) was speaking thus, an outcry resembling the wail of female cranes rose from the mouth of those consorts of Daśaratha (a ruler of men). (40) The same palace of Daśaratha which was formerly marked with the sound of tomtoms, large drums and Meghas (a musical instrument the sound of which resembled the rumbling of clouds) was now filled with extreme agony, agitated as it was through wails and cries and fallen on evil days. (41)

Thus ends Canto Thirty-nine in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XL

Going clockwise round Daśaratha (as a token of respect), Sītā, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa greet him. Accompanied by Sītā, Śrī Rāma salutes Kausalyā. Lakṣmaṇa too hails Kausalyā first and then his own mother, Sumitrā. Sumitrā for her part tenders salutary advice to her son The princes and the princess having mounted the chariot, Sumantra flicks the horses. The citizens that had assembled closely follow the chariot; but unable to keep pace with its swift movement, they return desolate. Daśaratha too runs after the chariot along with Kausalyā and others, but being unable to walk begins to totter and stops short on the road yielding to the remonstrances of his wise ministers.

अथ रामश्च सीता च लक्ष्मणश्च कृताञ्जलिः । उपसंगृह्य राजानं चक्रुर्दीनाः प्रदक्षिणम् ॥ १ ॥
तं चापि समनुज्ञाप्य धर्मज्ञः सह सीतया । राघवः शोकसम्मूढो जननीमभ्यवादयत् ॥ २ ॥
अन्वक्षं लक्ष्मणो भ्रातुः कौसल्यामभ्यवादयत् । अपि मातुः सुमित्राया जग्राह चरणौ पुनः ॥ ३ ॥
तं वन्दमानं रुदती माता सौमित्रिमब्रवीत् । हितकामा महाबाहुं मूर्ध्न्युपाघ्राय लक्ष्मणम् ॥ ४ ॥
सृष्टस्त्वं वनवासाय स्वनुरक्तः सुहृज्जने । रामे प्रमादं मा कार्षीः पुत्र भ्रातरि गच्छति ॥ ५ ॥
व्यसनी वा समृद्धो वा गतिरेष तवानघ । एष लोके सतां धर्मो यज्ज्येष्ठवशगो भवेत् ॥ ६ ॥
इदं हि वृत्तमुचितं कुलस्यास्य सनातनम् । दानं दीक्षा च यज्ञेषु तनुत्यागो मृधेषु हि ॥ ७ ॥
लक्ष्मणं त्वेवमुक्त्वासौ संसिद्धं प्रियराघवम् । सुमित्रा गच्छ गच्छेति पुनः पुनरुवाच तम् ॥ ८ ॥
रामं दशरथं विद्धि मां विद्धि जनकात्मजाम् । अयोध्यामटवीं विद्धि गच्छ तात यथासुखम् ॥ ९ ॥

Clasping the feet of and bowing to the king, Śrī Rāma and Sītā as well as Lakṣmaṇa, who felt miserable (because of their inability to be of any service to their aged parents) forthwith went round him clockwise with joined palms. (1) Duly obtaining leave of him and accompanied by Sītā, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who knew what is right and stood stupefied through grief, bowed to Kausalyā. (2) Following at the heels of his brother, Lakṣmaṇa too greeted Kausalyā; then he clasped the feet of his (own) mother, Sumitrā. (3) Smelling (as a token of affection) the head of the mighty-armed Lakṣmaṇa, who was saluting her, the mother, who wished well of him, spoke weeping to that son of hers (as follows):—(4) "Excessively fond as you are of your kinsman, Rāma, you have been permitted (by me) to dwell in the forest (with your eldest half-brother). (But) do not neglect, my son, the service of your (half-) brother, Rāma, who is going (with you). (5) He (alone) is your refuge, whether in adversity or (in) affluent (circumstances), O sinless one! Such is the rule of conduct followed by the virtuous in the world that a younger brother should be subject to the control of his elder brother. (6) To practise charity, to consecrate oneself for sacrificial performances and to drop one's body on the field of battle alone—this indeed constitutes the conduct appropriate to this race (of the Raghus) for all time." (7) Having exhorted Lakṣmaṇa as aforesaid, the said Sumitrā repeatedly said to the celebrated Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who was loved by all and was bent on leaving (for the forest), "Fare forth! Fare forth!! (May all be well with you)." (8) (She said to Lakṣmaṇa again,) "Know Rāma to be Daśaratha (your father), look upon Sītā (the daughter of Janaka) as myself (your mother) and esteem the forest as Ayodhya (your home) and depart, dear son, happily." (9)

ततः सुमन्त्रः काकुत्स्थं प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यमब्रवीत् । विनीतो विनयज्ञश्च मातलिर्वासवं यथा ॥१०॥
रथमारोह भद्रं ते राजपुत्र महायशः । क्षिप्रं त्वां प्रापयिष्यामि यत्र मां राम वक्ष्यसे ॥११॥
चतुर्दश हि वर्षाणि वस्तव्यानि वने त्वया । तान्युपक्रमितव्यानि यानि देव्या प्रचोदितः ॥१२॥
तं रथं सूर्यसंकाशं सीता हृष्टेन चेतसा । आरुरोह वरारोहा कृत्वालंकारमात्मनः ॥१३॥
वनवासं हि संख्याय वासांस्याभरणानि च । भर्तारमनुगच्छन्त्यै सीतायै श्वशुरो ददौ ॥१४॥
तथैवायुधजातानि भ्रातृभ्यां कवचानि च । रथोपस्थे प्रविन्यस्य सचर्म कठिनं च यत् ॥१५॥
अथो ज्वलनसंकाशं चामीकरविभूषितम् । तमारुरुहतुस्तूर्णं भ्रातरौ रामलक्ष्मणौ ॥१६॥

Then Sumantra, who was meek and knew how to behave politely, submitted with joined palms as follows to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) even as Mātali (the charioteer of Indra) would to Indra (the ruler of gods):—(10) "Mount the chariot, O highly illustrious prince; may all be well with you. I shall speedily take you to whatever place you will direct me to go. (11) Indeed those fourteen years that have to be spent by you in the forest as directed by the queen (Kaikeyī) are to be considered as having commenced (this very day)." (12) Having decked herself (with the articles of wearing apparel and ornaments bestowed on her by her father-in-law), Sītā, who had comely limbs, mounted with a delighted mind that chariot, which was resplendent like the sun. (13) Having carefully arranged in the hinder part of the chariot the raiments and jewels which her father-in-law, duly taking into account (the period of) her exile in the forest, had bestowed on Sītā while she was ready to accompany her husband (to the forest), and even so the sets of weapons and the pieces of armour he had given to the two brothers, as well as the basket, covered with leather, and the spade, the two brothers, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, then quickly mounted the aforesaid chariot, which was decked in gold and shone like fire. (14–16)

सीतातृतीयानारूढान् दृष्ट्वा रथमचोदयत् । सुमन्त्रः सम्मतानश्वान् वायुवेगसमाञ्जवे ॥१७॥
प्रयाते तु महारण्यं चिररात्राय राघवे । बभूव नगरे मूर्च्छा बलमूर्च्छा जनस्य च ॥१८॥
तत् समाकुलसम्भ्रान्तं मत्तसंकुपितद्विपम् । हयसिञ्जितनिर्घोषं पुरमासीन्महास्वनम् ॥१९॥
ततः सबालवृद्धा सा पुरी परमपीडिता । राममेवाभिदुद्राव घर्मार्तः सलिलं यथा ॥२०॥
पार्श्वतः पृष्ठतश्चापि लम्बमानास्तदुन्मुखाः । बाष्पपूर्णमुखाः सर्वे तमूचुर्भृशनिःस्वनाः ॥२१॥

Seeing the (three) exiles, of whom Sītā constituted the third, mounted on the chariot, Sumantra drove the horses, which were thought highly of and vied in speed with the velocity of the wind. (17) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) having departed for the great forest (of Daṇḍaka) for a long term, unconsciousness, however, prevailed (among the people) in the city; there was unconsciousness (in the army including even horses and elephants) as well as among the people visiting Ayodhya (from the districts). (18) Confounded and flurried with its elephants in rut highly excited, and resonant with the tinkling of the ornaments of its horses, the aforesaid city (of Ayodhya) was filled with great noise. (19) Sore stricken with agony, that city including the youngsters as well as the old people rushed towards Śrī Rāma in the same way as one oppressed with the sun would rush towards water. (20) Clinging to the sides and back (of the chariot) with their faces turned towards him and bathed with tears, all submitted to Sumantra in a loud voice :—(21)

संयच्छ वाजिनां रश्मीन् सूत याहि शनैः शनैः । मुखं द्रक्ष्याम रामस्य दुर्दर्शं नो भविष्यति ॥२२॥
आयसं हृदयं नूनं राममातुरसंशयम् । यद देवगर्भप्रतिमे वनं याति न भिद्यते ॥२३॥
कृतकृत्या हि वैदेही छायेवानुगता पतिम् । न जहाति रता धर्मे मेरुमर्कप्रभा यथा ॥२४॥
अहो लक्ष्मण सिद्धार्थः सततं प्रियवादिनम् । भ्रातरं देवसंकाशं यस्त्वं परिचरिष्यसि ॥२५॥
महत्येषा हि ते बुद्धिरेष चाभ्युदयो महान् । एष स्वर्गस्य मार्गश्च यदेनमनुगच्छसि ॥२६॥
एवं वदन्तस्ते सोढुं न शेकुर्बाष्पमागतम् । नरास्तमनुगच्छन्ति प्रियमिक्ष्वाकुनन्दनम् ॥२७॥

"Hold in the reins of the horses, O charioteer, and drive slowly and slowly. We would behold the countenance of Śrī Rāma, which would (henceforth) be difficult to behold. (22) The heart of Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother) is surely and undoubtedly made of steel in that it does not get riven (even) when her son, who resembles an offspring of gods, is departing for the forest ! (23) Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) has done what ought to be done inasmuch as she follows her husband like a shadow and, devoted to her duty, does not leave him any more than the light of the sun forsakes Mount Meru. (24) Oh Lakṣmaṇa, you are accomplished of purpose in that you are going to serve your godlike brother, who is ever disposed to speak kind words (to all). (25) Indeed this constitutes your great wisdom; nay, this is your great good fortune and this is the way to heaven (for you) that you are following Śrī Rāma !" (26) Saying so those men could not restrain their tears, that had (already) welled up (in their eyes), and followed their beloved Śrī Rāma (the delight of the Ikṣwākus). (27)

अथ राजा वृतः स्त्रीभिर्दीनाभिर्दीनचेतनः । निर्जगाम प्रियं पुत्रं द्रक्ष्यामीति ब्रुवन् गृहात् ॥२८॥
शुश्रुवे चाग्रतः स्त्रीणां रुदतीनां महास्वनः । यथा नादः करेणूनां बद्धे महति कुञ्जरे ॥२९॥

पिता हि राजा काकुत्स्थः श्रीमान् सन्नस्तदा बभौ । परिपूर्णः शशी काले ग्रहेणोपप्लुतो यथा ॥३०॥
स च श्रीमानचिन्त्यात्मा रामो दशरथात्मजः । सूतं संचोदयामास त्वरितं वाह्यतामिति ॥३१॥
रामो याहीति तं सूतं तिष्ठेति च जनस्तथा । उभयं नाशकत् सूतः कर्तुमध्वनि चोदितः ॥३२॥
निर्गच्छति महाबाहौ रामे पौरजनाश्रुभिः । पतितैरभ्यवहितं प्रणनाश महीरजः ॥३३॥
रुदिताश्रुपरिद्यूनं हाहाकृतमचेतनम् । प्रयाणे राघवस्यासीत् पुरं परमपीडितम् ॥३४॥
सुस्राव नयनैः स्त्रीणामस्रमायाससम्भवम् । मीनसंक्षोभचलितैः सलिलं पङ्कजैरिव ॥३५॥

Meanwhile, surrounded by his consorts,—who were (all) feeling miserable,—and distressed in mind, the king sallied forth from his palace. saying "I shall see my beloved son." (28) In front of him was heard the great noise of crying women, resembling the trumpeting of she-elephants on a lordly elephant (the leader of their herd) having been bound (with chains). (29) At that time, the father (of Śrī Rāma), the glorious King Daśaratha (a scion of Kakutstha), looked lustreless indeed like the full moon overshadowed by Rāhu during a lunar eclipse. (30) The illustrious son of Daśaratha, Śrī Rāma, on the other hand of inconceivable firmness commanded the charioteer in the words "Let the chariot be driven fast." (31) Śrī Rāma commanded the celebrated charioteer in the words "Move on !" and the people (following the chariot) likewise said to him, "Stop !" Urged (both ways) on the road, the charioteer (however) could do neither. (32) The dust raised on the road (even) as the mighty-armed Śrī Rāma drove out (of the city for the forest) settled down due to the tears that fell (from the eyes) of the citizens (following at his heels). (33) Full of lamentation and tears and (therefore) doleful (in appearance) at the departure of Śrī Rāma, the citizens (of Ayodhya), who were stricken with deep agony and commenced wailing loudly, became unconscious. (34) Tears born of agony (caused by separation from Śrī Rāma) flowed from the eyes of women like (drops of) water from lotuses shaken by the commotion of fish. (35)

दृष्ट्वा तु नृपतिः श्रीमानेकचित्तगतं पुरम् । निपपातैव दुःखेन कृत्तमूल इव द्रुमः ॥३६॥
ततो हलहलाशब्दो जज्ञे रामस्य पृष्ठतः । नराणां प्रेक्ष्य राजानं सीदन्तं भृशदुःखितम् ॥३७॥
हा रामेति जनाः केचिद् राममातेति चापरे । अन्तःपुरसमृद्धं च क्रोशन्तं पर्यदेवयन् ॥३८॥
अन्वीक्षमाणो रामस्तु विषण्णं भ्रान्तचेतसम् । राजानं मातरं चैव ददर्शानुगतौ पथि ॥३९॥
स बद्ध इव पाशेन किशोरो मातरं यथा । धर्मपाशेन संयुक्तः प्रकाशं नाभ्युदैक्षत ॥४०॥
पदातिनौ च यानार्हावदुःखार्हौ सुखोचितौ । दृष्ट्वा संचोदयामास शीघ्रं याहीति सारथिम् ॥४१॥
नहि तत् पुरुषव्याघ्रो दुःखजं दर्शनं पितुः । मातुश्च सहितुं शक्तस्तोत्त्रैर्नुन्न इव द्विपः ॥४२॥
प्रत्यगारमिवायान्ती सवत्सा वत्सकारणात् । बद्धवत्सा यथा धेनू राममाताभ्यधावत ॥४३॥

Seeing the city reduced to singleness of mind, the glorious king for his part fell down precipitately like a tree cut at the root. (36) Perceiving the king sore distressed and suffering agony, an outcry thereupon rose from (the mouths of) men in the rear of Śrī Rāma. (37) Seeing him wailing with the inmates of his gynaeceum some people cried out, "Oh Rāma", while others exclaimed, "Oh Rāma's mother !" (38) Looking back, Śrī Rāma forthwith beheld the king, dejected and perplexed in mind, as well as his (own) mother (Kausalyā) following (him) on the road. (39) Bound by the cord of duty, he did not openly gaze on them any more than a foal, caught in a snare would look at its dam. (40) Seeing them walking, though worthy of a chariot, unworthy of suffering and deserving of comfort, he commanded the charioteer in the words "Drive fast !" (41) (Even) as an elephant urged on with goads is unable to look behind, Śrī Rāma (a tiger among men) too was unable to bear the distressing sight of his father and mother (following him on foot). (42) Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother) rushed forth (after Śrī Rāma) as a cow that has given birth to a calf and whose calf stands tied (at the stall) would run to meet it while returning to its stall (from the pasture). (43)

तथा रुदन्तीं कौसल्यां रथं तमनुधावतीम् । क्रोशन्तीं राम रामेति हा सीते लक्ष्मणेति च ॥४४॥
रामलक्ष्मणसीतार्थं स्रवन्तीं वारि नेत्रजम् । असकृत् प्रैक्षत स तां नृत्यन्तीमिव मातरम् ॥४५॥
तिष्ठेति राजा चुक्रोश याहि याहीति राघवः । सुमन्त्रस्य बभूवात्मा चक्रयोरिव चान्तरा ॥४६॥
नाश्रौषमिति राजानमुपालब्धोऽपि वक्ष्यसि । चिरं दुःखस्य पापिष्ठमिति रामस्तमब्रवीत् ॥४७॥
स रामस्य वचः कुर्वन्ननुज्ञाप्य च तं जनम् । व्रजतोऽपि हयाञ्शीघ्रं चोदयामास सारथिः ॥४८॥
न्यवर्तत जनो राज्ञो रामं कृत्वा प्रदक्षिणम् । मनसाप्याशुवेगेन न न्यवर्तत मानुषम् ॥४९॥
यमिच्छेत् पुनरायातं नैनं दूरमनुव्रजेत् । इत्यमात्या महाराजमूचुर्दशरथं वचः ॥५०॥
तेषां वचः सर्वगुणोपपन्नः प्रस्विन्नगात्रः प्रविषण्णरूपः ।
निशम्य राजा कृपणः सभार्यो व्यवस्थितस्तं सुतमीक्षमाणः ॥५१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४० ॥

Śrī Rāma repeatedly gazed on his aforesaid mother, Kausalyā, who was weeping as above and following that chariot as though dancing, crying "Rāma, O Rāma, Oh Sītā, O Lakṣmaṇa !" and shedding tears for the sake of Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā. (44-45) The king (on the one hand) exclaimed saying "Stop !", while Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) called out "Go on ! Proceed !!" (In this way) Sumantra's mind was placed in a dilemma as one would feel while standing between two (revolving) wheels. (46) Śrī Rāma said to him, "Even when twitted (by the king on going back to Ayodhya, for not carrying out his orders), you will say, 'I did not hear (your call).' Prolongation of this agony (caused by witnessing the sad plight of my aged and feeble parents) would prove most calamitous." (47) Carrying out the behest of Śrī Rāma and taking leave of that crowd (which was following at his heels), the aforesaid charioteer urged on the horses, that were (already) moving (ahead), to go fast. (48) (Mentally) going round Śrī Rāma clockwise the king's men returned (to the king's presence with their body, which could not keep pace with the chariot, though they accompanied Śrī Rāma with their mind to the forest); the commonalty (however) did not return even (with their body as they did not return) with their mind, which was possessed of a quick speed. (49) (On returning to the king's presence) the ministers submitted to Emperor Daśaratha as follows :—"One should not follow to a long distance him whom one wishes to see come back." (50) Hearing their submission, the king, who was endowed with all virtues and felt miserable, stopped short, gazing with his consorts, on his celebrated son (Śrī Rāma) nay, perspiring all over his body and wearing a most dejected appearance. (51)

Thus ends Canto Forty in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLI

The ladies of the royal gynaeceum bewail the exile of Śrī Rāma and others and the citizens of Ayodhya too are reduced to a miserable plight.

तस्मिंस्तु पुरुषव्याघ्रे निष्क्रामति कृताञ्जलौ । आर्तशब्दो हि संजज्ञे स्त्रीणामन्तःपुरे महान् ॥ १ ॥
अनाथस्य जनस्यास्य दुर्बलस्य तपस्विनः । यो गतिः शरणं चासीत् स नाथः क्व नु गच्छति ॥ २ ॥
न क्रुध्यत्यभिशस्तोऽपि क्रोधनीयानि वर्जयन् । क्रुद्धान् प्रसादयन् सर्वान् समदुःखः क्व गच्छति ॥ ३ ॥
कौसल्यायां महातेजा यथा मातरि वर्तते । तथा यो वर्ततेऽस्मासु महात्मा क्व नु गच्छति ॥ ४ ॥
कैकेय्या क्लिश्यमानेन राज्ञा संचोदितो वनम् । परित्राता जनस्यास्य जगतः क्व नु गच्छति ॥ ५ ॥
अहो निश्चेतनो राजा जीवलोकस्य संक्षयम् । धर्म्यं सत्यव्रतं रामं वनवासे प्रवत्स्यति ॥ ६ ॥
इति सर्वा महिष्यस्ता विवत्सा इव धेनवः । रुरुदुश्चैव दुःखार्ताः सस्वरं च विचुक्रुशुः ॥ ७ ॥

Even as Śrī Rāma (that tiger among men) was driving out (of Ayodhya) with joined palms, a loud plaintive cry actually burst forth from (the mouths of) the ladies in the gynaeceum. (1) (They exclaimed:) "Oh, where goes that lord, who was the refuge and protector of us helpless, weak and forlorn people? (2) Oh, where goes the prince to whom joy and sorrow made no difference, (nay) who did not lose temper even when slandered, avoided provoking words and pacified all who were angry? (3) Where goes the high-souled Śrī Rāma, who is endowed with exceptional glory and who behaved with us (in the same way) as he did with his own mother, Kausalyā? (4) Oh, where goes Śrī Rāma, the protector not only of us all but even of the world, enjoined to proceed to the forest by the king, who was being tormented by Kaikeyī? (5) How insensible is the king, who has sent into exile to the forest the virtuous Prince Rāma, who is the support of the (entire) living creation and is vowed to truthfulness!" (6) Stricken with agony all the aforesaid queens lamented in this way and cried at the top of their voice like (so many) cows bereft of their calf. (7)

स तमन्तःपुरे घोरमार्तशब्दं महीपतिः । पुत्रशोकाभिसंतप्तः श्रुत्वा चासीत् सुदुःखितः ॥ ८ ॥
नाग्निहोत्राण्यहूयन्त नापचन् गृहमेधिनः । अकुर्वन् न प्रजाः कार्यं सूर्यश्चान्तरधीयत ॥ ९ ॥
व्यसृजन् कवलान् नागा गावो वत्सान् न पाययन् । पुत्रं प्रथमजं लब्ध्वा जननी नाभ्यनन्दत ॥१०॥
त्रिशङ्कुर्लोहिताङ्गश्च बृहस्पतिबुधावपि । दारुणाः सोममभ्येत्य ग्रहाः सर्वे व्यवस्थिताः ॥११॥
नक्षत्राणि गतार्चींषि ग्रहाश्च गततेजसः । विशाखाश्च सधूमाश्च नभसि प्रचकाशिरे ॥१२॥
कालिकानिलवेगेन महोदधिरिवोत्थितः । रामे वनं प्रव्रजिते नगरं प्रचचाल तत् ॥१३॥
दिशः पर्याकुलाः सर्वास्तिमिरेणेव संवृताः । न ग्रहो नापि नक्षत्रं प्रचकाशे न किंचन ॥१४॥
अकस्मान्नागरः सर्वो जनो दैन्यमुपागमत् । आहारे वा विहारे वा न कश्चिदकरोन्मनः ॥१५॥

शोकपर्यायसंतप्तः सततं दीर्घमुच्छ्वसन् । अयोध्यायां जनः सर्वश्चुक्रोश जगतीपतिम् ॥१६॥
बाष्पपर्याकुलमुखो राजमार्गगतो जनः । न हृष्टो लभ्यते कश्चित् सर्वः शोकपरायणः ॥१७॥

Hearing that frightful plaintive cry in the gynaeceum, King Daśaratha, who was (already) tormented with grief caused by separation from his son, felt sore distressed. (8) No oblations were poured into the sacred fire (by those maintaining the sacred fire); no householders cooked food; people did not carry on their business and the sun went out of sight (even before sunset due to untimely clouds). (9) Elephants dropped grass etc. from their mouths; cows refused to give suck to their calves; mothers did not rejoice to meet their first-born son. (10) Getting conjoined (through a retrogade movement) with the moon, Triśanku and Mars, even Jupiter and Mercury and all other luminaries assumed a stern aspect. (11) The lunar mansions lost their brilliance and the planets their splendour. Proceeding on a wrong course they cast a hazy lustre in the heavens. (12) Driven by a blast of wind, a mass of clouds rose (in the sky) like a turbulent ocean. (Nay) Śrī Rāma having departed for the forest, the city of Ayodhya rocked to and fro. (13) All the (four) quarters became obscure as though enveloped in darkness. No planet nor any lunar mansion emitted the faintest light. (14) All of a sudden all the people of Ayodhya were reduced to a wretched plight. None could give his or her mind to food or recreation. (15) Tormented with recurrence of grief and sighing heavily all the time, all the people of Ayodhya cursed the emperor. (16) Men walking on the public road had their face soiled with tears. None was found merry, all were plunged in grief. (17)

न वाति पवनः शीतो न शशी सौम्यदर्शनः । न सूर्यस्तपते लोकं सर्वं पर्याकुलं जगत् ॥१८॥
अनर्थिनः सुताः स्त्रीणां भर्तारो भ्रातरस्तथा । सर्वे सर्वं परित्यज्य राममेवान्वचिन्तयन् ॥१९॥
ये तु रामस्य सुहृदः सर्वे ते मूढचेतसः । शोकभारेण चाक्रान्ताः शयनं नैव भेजिरे ॥२०॥
ततस्त्वयोध्या रहिता महात्मना पुरंदरेणेव मही सपर्वता ।
चचाल घोरं भयशोकदीपिता सनागयोधाश्वगणा ननाद च ॥२१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४१ ॥

No cool breeze blew nor did the moon present a placid appearance, nor again did the sun warm the people (with its rays). The whole world was disturbed in mind. (18) Sons were indifferent to their mothers, husbands were of no use to their wives and brothers had no use for their brothers. Abandoning everything (else) all focussed their thought on Śrī Rāma alone. (19) All those, however, who were friends of Śrī Rāma were perplexed in mind and had no sleep, overwhelmed as they were with excess of grief. (20) Excited through fear and grief, the city of Ayodhya, bereft of Śrī Rāma (the high-souled prince), was thereupon violently disturbed,—(even) as the earth along with its mountains rocks to and fro when bereft of Indra (the destroyer of strongholds),—and cried with its elephants, warriors and horses. (21)

Thus ends Canto Forty-one in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्विचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLII

Śrī Rāma having departed for the forest in an exceptionally swift-going chariot, Daśaratha vainly seeks to cover the intervening distance on foot. The very dust raised by the chariot having disappeared after a while, the emperor feels doubly disconsolate and drops to the ground. When Kaikeyī comes forward to support him he scolds her and asks her not to touch his person. Kausalyā then lifts him up and persuades him to return. His personal attendants take him to the latter's apartments and, seeing him plunged in grief, Kausalyā seats herself beside him and begins to lament in various ways.

यावत् तु निर्यतस्तस्य रजोरूपमदृश्यत । नैवेक्ष्वाकुवरस्तावत् संजहारात्मचक्षुषी ॥ १ ॥
यावद् राजा प्रियं पुत्रं पश्यत्यत्यन्तधार्मिकम् । तावद् व्यवर्धतेवास्य धरण्यां पुत्रदर्शने ॥ २ ॥
न पश्यति रजोऽप्यस्य यदा रामस्य भूमिपः । तदाऽऽर्तश्च विषण्णश्च पपात धरणीतले ॥ ३ ॥
तस्य दक्षिणमन्वागात् कौसल्या बाहुमङ्गना । परं चास्यान्वगात् पार्श्वं कैकेयी सा सुमध्यमा ॥ ४ ॥
तां नयेन च सम्पन्नो धर्मेण विनयेन च । उवाच राजा कैकेयीं समीक्ष्य व्यथितेन्द्रियः ॥ ५ ॥

So long, however, as the clouds of the dust that followed Śrī Rāma (even) as he was going out (to the forest) could be seen Daśaratha (the foremost of the Ikṣwākus) did not turn his eyes away (from them). (1) So long as the king saw his beloved and most virtuous son (in the form of the dust raised by his chariot) his body stood on the ground growing in size as it were (to be able) to catch a glimpse of his (gradually receding) son. (2) The moment (however) the king ceased to behold even the dust of (the chariot of) the said Śrī Rāma, he dropped to the ground afflicted and dejected. (3) His (seniormost) wife, Kausalyā, approached his right arm (in order to lift him up by that arm), while the notorious Kaikeyī of charming limbs went up to his other (left) side. (4) Distressed in mind to behold Kaikeyī, the king, who was richly endowed with prudence, as well as with piety and culture, spoke to her (as follows):— (5)

कैकेयि मामकाङ्गानि मा स्प्राक्षीः पापनिश्चये । नहि त्वां द्रष्टुमिच्छामि न भार्या न च बान्धवी ॥ ६ ॥
ये च त्वामनुजीवन्ति नाहं तेषां न ते मम । केवलार्थपरां हि त्वां त्यक्तधर्मां त्यजाम्यहम् ॥ ७ ॥
अगृह्णां यच्च ते पाणिमग्निं पर्यणयं च यत् । अनुजानामि तत् सर्वमस्मिँल्लोके परत्र च ॥ ८ ॥
भरतश्चेत् प्रतीतः स्याद् राज्यं प्राप्यैतदव्ययम् । यन्मे स दद्यात् पित्रर्थं मा मां तद्दत्तमागमत् ॥ ९ ॥
अथ रेणुसमुद्ध्वस्तं समुत्थाप्य नराधिपम् । न्यवर्तत तदा देवी कौसल्या शोककर्शिता ॥१०॥
हत्वेव ब्राह्मणं कामात् स्पृष्ट्वाग्निमिव पाणिना । अन्वतप्यत धर्मात्मा पुत्रं संचिन्त्य राघवम् ॥११॥

निवृत्यैव निवृत्यैव सीदतो रथवर्त्मसु । राज्ञो नातिबभौ रूपं ग्रस्तस्यांशुमतो यथा ॥१२॥
विललाप स दुःखार्तः प्रियं पुत्रमनुस्मरन् । नगरान्तमनुप्राप्तं बुद्ध्वा पुत्रमथाब्रवीत् ॥१३॥

"O Kaikeyī of sinful resolve, (pray) do not touch my limbs, really I do not wish to see you; you are neither my wedded wife nor my relation. (6) (Nay) I am no longer the master of those who depend for their subsistence on you nor are they my servants any more. I disown you, who are solely devoted to your selfish ends and have forsaken virtue. (7) I (hereby) disclaim all the benefits that will accrue to me (hereafter) in this world and the next from the fact that I clasped your hand (in marriage) and took you round the fire (with me). (8) If Bharata gets delighted to receive this sovereignty free from hindrance, let not that which he offers to me (after my death) by way of obsequial oblations intended for his departed ancestors reach me (in the other world)." (9) Forthwith lifting up the king, who was soiled with dust (due to his having toppled down), Queen Kausalyā, who had been emaciated through grief, then returned (to the palace with the king). (10) Thinking deeply of his son, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), Daśaratha (of pious mind) gave way to repentance (for having sent him into exile under pressure from Kaikeyī), even as one is stung with remorse on having voluntarily killed a Brahman or on touching a (blazing) fire with one's own hand. (11) The appearance of the king, who, turning back again and again, exerted himself to gaze on the path which the chariot (of Śrī Rāma) had taken, did not look charming any more than the orb of the sun in eclipse. (12) Thinking all the time of his beloved son (Śrī Rāma), he lamented, stricken with agony as he was. Coming to know of his son having reached the outskirts of the city, he then spoke (as follows) :—(13)

वाहनानां च मुख्यानां वहतां तं ममात्मजम् । पदानि पथि दृश्यन्ते स महात्मा न दृश्यते ॥१४॥
यः सुखेनोपधानेषु शेते चन्दनरूषितः । वीज्यमानो महार्हाभिः स्त्रीभिर्मम सुतोत्तमः ॥१५॥
स नूनं क्वचिदेवाद्य वृक्षमूलमुपाश्रितः । काष्ठं वा यदि वाश्मानमुपधाय शयिष्यते ॥१६॥
उत्थास्यति च मेदिन्याः कृपणः पांसुगुण्ठितः । विनिःश्वसन् प्रस्रवणात् करेणूनामिवर्षभः ॥१७॥
द्रक्ष्यन्ति नूनं पुरुषा दीर्घबाहुं वनेचराः । राममुत्थाय गच्छन्तं लोकनाथमनाथवत् ॥१८॥
सा नूनं जनकस्येष्टा सुता सुखसदोचिता । कण्टकाक्रमणक्रान्ता वनमद्य गमिष्यति ॥१९॥
अनभिज्ञा वनानां सा नूनं भयमुपैष्यति । श्वपदानर्दितं श्रुत्वा गम्भीरं रोमहर्षणम् ॥२०॥
सकामा भव कैकेयि विधवा राज्यमावस । नहि तं पुरुषव्याघ्रं विना जीवितुमुत्सहे ॥२१॥

"The marks of the hoofs of the excellent horses drawing the chariot of my celebrated son are (no doubt) seen on the road, but that high-souled prince is no longer seen. (14) That jewel among my sons, who, having been smeared (all over) with sandal-paste, used to repose comfortably on cushions and pillows, while being fanned by women possessed of great comeliness and adorned with costly jewels will surely lie down today at some unknown place at the foot of a tree resting his head on a block of wood or stone ! (15-16) (Nay, at the close of night) he will rise from the (bare) ground in a wretched condition, enveloped in dust and exhaling audibly like a leader of elephants rising from beside a spring. (17) Undoubtedly people living in the forest will behold Rāma, the protector of the world, who is possessed of long arms, rising (from sleep in the forest) and going forth like one forlorn.

(18) That beloved daughter of Janaka, who is ever worthy of (all kinds of) amenities, will surely walk today to the forest (barefooted and therefore) injured by treading on thorns. (19) Unacquainted (as she is) with the woods, she will doubtless be struck with fear to hear the deep and thrilling roar of beasts of prey. (20) Having your wishes fulfilled, O Kaikeyī, enjoy the kingdom as a widow. I am unable to live without that tiger among men." (21)

इत्येवं विलपन् राजा जनौघेनाभिसंवृतः । अपस्नात इवारिष्टं प्रविवेश गृहोत्तमम् ॥२२॥
शून्यचत्वरवेश्मान्तां संवृतापणवेदिकाम् । क्लान्तदुर्बलदुःखार्तां नात्याकीर्णमहापथाम् ॥२३॥
तामवेक्ष्य पुरीं सर्वां राममेवानुचिन्तयन् । विलपन् प्राविशद् राजा गृहं सूर्य इवाम्बुदम् ॥२४॥
महाह्रदमिवाक्षोभ्यं सुपर्णेन हृतोरगम् । रामेण रहितं वेश्म वैदेह्या लक्ष्मणेन च ॥२५॥
अथ गद्गदशब्दस्तु विलपन् वसुधाधिपः । उवाच मृदु मन्दार्थं वचनं दीनमस्वरम् ॥२६॥
कौसल्याया गृहं शीघ्रं राममातुर्नयन्तु माम् । न ह्यन्यत्र ममाश्वासो हृदयस्य भविष्यति ॥२७॥
इति ब्रुवन्तं राजानमनयन् द्वारदर्शिनः । कौसल्याया गृहं तत्र न्यवेशयत विनीतवत् ॥२८॥

Lamenting as aforesaid, and surrounded on all sides by a multitude of men, the king entered his excellent abode, which was full of sorrow, like one who has bathed on the death of a relation. (22) Perceiving the entire city of Ayodhya with its cross roads and portals deserted and the sheds in front of shops (where merchandise was spread) closed, its people depressed in spirits, feeble and afflicted and its highways not very crowded, the king entered his palace wailing and thinking all the time of Śrī Rāma alone, (even) as the sun enters a cloud. (23-24) Bereft of Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, the palace looked like a big pool rendered imperturbable due to its snakes having been carried away by Garuḍa. (25) The lamenting emperor then spoke (to the porters) in faltering, soft, pitiful and indistinct words, which were (also) not clearly intelligible (as follows) :—(26) "Take me speedily to the apartments of Kausalyā, the mother of Rāma; for nowhere else will my heart find solace." (27) The porters took the king, who was speaking as aforesaid, to the apartments of Kausalyā and there he was gently laid (by them on a couch). (28)

ततस्तत्र प्रविष्टस्य कौसल्याया निवेशनम् । अधिरुह्यापि शयनं बभूव लुलितं मनः ॥२९॥
पुत्रद्वयविहीनं च स्नुषया च विवर्जितम् । अपश्यद् भवनं राजा नष्टचन्द्रमिवाम्बरम् ॥३०॥
तच्च दृष्ट्वा महाराजो भुजमुद्यम्य वीर्यवान् । उच्चैःस्वरेण प्राक्रोशद्धा राम विजहासि नौ ॥३१॥
सुखिता बत तं कालं जीविष्यन्ति नरोत्तमाः । परिष्वजन्तो ये रामं द्रक्ष्यन्ति पुनरागतम् ॥३२॥
अथ रात्र्यां प्रपन्नायां कालरात्र्यामिवात्मनः । अर्धरात्रे दशरथः कौसल्यामिदमब्रवीत् ॥३३॥
न त्वां पश्यामि कौसल्ये साधु मां पाणिना स्पृश । रामं मेऽनुगता दृष्टिरद्यापि न निवर्तते ॥३४॥
तं राममेवानुविचिन्तयन्तं समीक्ष्य देवी शयने नरेन्द्रम् ।
उपोपविश्याधिकमार्तरूपा विनिःश्वसन्तं विललाप कृच्छ्रम् ॥३५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्विचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४२ ॥

The mind of the king, even though he had entered Kausalyā's apartments and had been laid on a couch, continued to be restless. (29) The king found the palace, which was bereft of his two sons and destitute of his daughter-in-law, devoid of charm as the sky without the moon (and the stars). (30) Looking at the palace and lifting up his arm, the powerful emperor cried in a loud voice:—"Oh Rāma, are you (really) deserting us both (your mother as well as myself)? (31) Alas, those jewels among men alone who will survive the term of Rāma's exile and (are eventually able to) see him come back, clasping him to their bosom, will be (really) happy!" (32) Now when the night arrived,—the night which was as it were the night of Dissolution for him,—King Daśaratha spoke at midnight to Kausalyā as follows:—(33) "Kausalyā, I am unable to see you. (Please) touch me with your hand well. Having followed Rāma, my sight has not yet returned." (34) Perceiving the aforesaid monarch on the couch,—who was thinking deeply all the time of Śrī Rāma alone and breathing hard with difficulty,—and sitting by his side, the queen (Kausalyā), who wore a distressed look (about her), began to wail. (35)

Thus ends Canto Forty-two in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रिचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLIII

The Lament of Kausalyā

ततः समीक्ष्य शयने सन्नं शोकेन पार्थिवम् । कौसल्या पुत्रशोकार्ता तमुवाच महीपतिम् ॥ १ ॥
राघवे नरशार्दूले विषं मुक्त्वाहिजिह्मगा । विचरिष्यति कैकेयी निर्मुक्तेव हि पन्नगी ॥ २ ॥
विवास्य रामं सुभगा लब्धकामा समाहिता । त्रासयिष्यति मां भूयो दुष्टाहिरिव वेश्मनि ॥ ३ ॥
अथास्मिन् नगरे रामश्चरन् भैक्षं गृहे वसेत् । कामकारो वरं दातुमपि दासं ममात्मजम् ॥ ४ ॥
पातयित्वा तु कैकेय्या रामं स्थानाद् यथेष्टतः । प्रविद्धो रक्षसां भागः पर्वणीवाहिताग्निना ॥ ५ ॥
नागराजगतिर्वीरो महाबाहुर्धनुर्धरः । वनमाविशते नूनं सभार्यः सहलक्ष्मणः ॥ ६ ॥
वने त्वदृष्टदुःखानां कैकेय्यनुमते त्वया । त्यक्तानां वनवासाय कान्यावस्था भविष्यति ॥ ७ ॥

Perceiving the king lying on the couch stricken with grief, Kausalyā, who was feeling distressed due to grief on account of separation from her son (Śrī Rāma), spoke to the said king (as follows):—(1) "Having discharged her poison on Rāma (a scion of Raghu), a tiger among men, indeed, Kaikeyī of crooked ways will surely wander about freely like a female serpent that has cast off its slough. (2) Having exiled Rāma and (thereby) achieved her desired end, Kaikeyī, whose stars are propitious and whose mind is at rest (now), will further cause fear to me (undisturbed) like a wicked serpent dwelling in one's own house. (3) Even if Rāma were allowed to remain at his home in Ayodhya living on alms, it would be preferable (to me in comparison to his exile). (Nay), it would be better even to consign my son to her as a slave. (4) Having wantonly thrown Rāma out of his position, Kaikeyī has acted in the same way as an oblation (intended for the gods) may be consigned to ogres on a new or full moon by one who tends the sacred fire. (5) Accompanied by his wife and Lakṣmaṇa and walking like a king of elephants, bow in hand, the mighty-armed hero will have surely entered the forest (by now). (6) In a forest what other fate (than the hardships of forest life) can befall the youths, who had never known suffering (before) and who have been consigned by you to a forest life following the wishes of Kaikeyī? (7)

ते रत्नहीनास्तरुणाः फलकाले विवासिताः । कथं वत्स्यन्ति कृपणाः फलमूलैः कृताशनाः ॥ ८ ॥
अपीदानीं स कालः स्यान्मम शोकक्षयः शिवः । सहभार्यं सह भ्रात्रा पश्येयमिह राघवम् ॥ ९ ॥
श्रुत्वैवोपस्थितौ वीरौ कदायोध्या भविष्यति । यशस्विनी हृष्टजना सूच्छ्रितध्वजमालिनी ॥१०॥
कदा प्रेक्ष्य नरव्याघ्रावरण्यात् पुनरागतौ । भविष्यति पुरी हृष्टा समुद्र इव पर्वणि ॥११॥
कदायोध्यां महाबाहुः पुरीं वीरः प्रवेक्ष्यति । पुरस्कृत्य रथे सीतां वृषभो गोवधूमिव ॥१२॥
कदा प्राणिसहस्राणि राजमार्गे ममात्मजौ । लाजैरवकरिष्यन्ति प्रविशन्तावरिंदमौ ॥१३॥
प्रविशन्तौ कदायोध्यां द्रक्ष्यामि शुभकुण्डलौ । उदग्रायुधनिस्त्रिंशौ सशृङ्गाविव पर्वतौ ॥१४॥
कदा सुमनसः कन्याद्विजातीनां फलानि च । प्रदिशन्तः पुरीं हृष्टाः करिष्यन्ति प्रदक्षिणम् ॥१५॥
कदा परिणतो बुद्ध्या वयसा चामरप्रभः । अभ्युपैष्यति धर्मात्मा सुवर्ष इव लालयन् ॥१६॥

"Exiled at a time when they should have (in the ordinary circumstances) enjoyed the fruits (amenities) of life, how shall the poor youths, who have been deprived of (all) precious things, drag their existence living on fruits and roots? (8) Will that happy time, marked with the end of my grief, ever come, when I shall (be able to) see Rāma (a scion of Raghu) accompanied by his wife and (younger) brother back in Ayodhya? (9) When will Ayodhya regain her (pristine) glory, throb with joyous crowds and be adorned (once more) with rows of towering banners the moment it hears of the two heroic princes (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) being present? (10) When will the city wax jubilant (again) like an ocean on a full moon (night) to perceive the two princes, who are (really) tigers among men, come back from the forest? (11) When will the mighty-armed hero (Śrī Rāma) enter (again) the city of Ayodhya placing Sītā at his head in the chariot, (even) as a bull would follow a cow? (12) When will thousands of men cover with parched grains of paddy on the public road my two sons (Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), the subduers of their enemy, entering the city? (13) When shall I (be able to) see the two princes, adorned with splendid ear-rings and armed with excellent bows and swords, entering Ayodhya like a pair of mountains crowned with peaks? (14) When will the three darlings merrily go round the city clockwise, receiving on the way flowers from the hands of virgins and fruits from those of Brahmans? (15) When will the pious Rāma, grown ripe in intellect and shining like a god in point of age (eternal youth), return fostering the world like a good (timely) shower? (16)

निस्संशयं मया मन्ये पुरा वीर कदर्यया । पातुकामेषु वत्सेषु मातॄणां शातिताः स्तनाः ॥१७॥
साहं गौरिव सिंहेन विवत्सा वत्सला कृता । कैकेय्या पुरुषव्याघ्र बालवत्सेव गौर्बलात् ॥१८॥
नहि तावद् गुणैर्जुष्टं सर्वशास्त्रविशारदम् । एकपुत्रा विना पुत्रमहं जीवितुमुत्सहे ॥१९॥
न हि मे जीविते किंचित् सामर्थ्यमिह कल्प्यते । अपश्यन्त्याः प्रियं पुत्रं लक्ष्मणं च महाबलम् ॥२०॥

अयं हि मां दीपयतेऽद्य वह्निस्तनूजशोकप्रभवो महाहितः ।
महीमिमां रश्मिभिरुत्तमप्रभो यथा निदाघे भगवान् दिवाकरः ॥२१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्रिचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४३ ॥

"Undoubtedly in some past life, I believe, O valiant king, the teats of cows were cut off by me, mean-minded as I was, while their calves stood waiting to suck them. (17) Fond of my child like a cow, O tiger among men, I have for this (very) reason been forcibly deprived of my child by Kaikeyī in the same way as a cow having a calf of tender age may be deprived of her calf by a lion. (18) Having only one son, I am surely unable to survive without that son, who is endowed with all virtues and is well-versed in all the scriptures. (19) There is not the least capacity in me to sustain my life here so long as I fail to perceive my beloved son (Rāma) and Lakṣmaṇa, who is possessed of great strength. (20) This fire, born of grief occasioned by separation from my son, which is exceedingly harmful to me sure enough, is torturing me today in the same way as the glorious sun, possessed of greatest splendour, scorches this earth with its rays in summer." (21)

Thus ends Canto Forty-three in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुश्चत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLIV

Establishing the greatness of Śri Rāma, Sumitrā, who is a pastmaster in eloquence, assuages Kausalyā's grief.

विलपन्तीं तथा तां तु कौसल्यां प्रमदोत्तमाम् । इदं धर्मे स्थिता धर्म्यं सुमित्रा वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
तवार्ये सद्गुणैर्युक्तः स पुत्रः पुरुषोत्तमः । किं ते विलपितेनैवं कृपणं रुदितेन वा ॥ २ ॥
यस्तवार्ये गतः पुत्रस्त्यक्त्वा राज्यं महाबलः । साधु कुर्वन् महात्मानं पितरं सत्यवादिनम् ॥ ३ ॥
शिष्टैराचरिते सम्यक् शश्वत् प्रेत्य फलोदये । रामो धर्मे स्थितः श्रेष्ठो न स शोच्यः कदाचन ॥ ४ ॥
वर्तते चोत्तमां वृत्तिं लक्ष्मणोऽस्मिन् सदानघः । दयावान् सर्वभूतेषु लाभस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥ ५ ॥
अरण्यवासे यद् दुःखं जानन्त्येव सुखोचिता । अनुगच्छति वैदेही धर्मात्मानं तवात्मजम् ॥ ६ ॥
कीर्तिभूतां पताकां यो लोके भ्रमयति प्रभुः । धर्मः सत्यव्रतपरः किं न प्राप्तस्तवात्मजः ॥ ७ ॥

Sumitrā, who was devoted to righteousness, addressed for her part the following words, which were in consonance with the spirit of righteousness, to the celebrated Kausalyā, the foremost of women, who had been wailing as aforesaid:—(1) "That son of yours, O noble lady, is adorned with excellent virtues and is the foremost among men. What purpose will be served by your wailing in this way or by weeping piteously ? (2) Your noblest son, Rāma, who is possessed of great strength, O noble lady, and who, having renounced the throne, has proceeded to the forest, (thereby) proving his high-souled father to be perfectly truthful, is devoted to the path of virtue, which has been eternally and duly followed by the cultured and which brings its reward in the other world. (As such) he never deserves to be pitied. (3-4) The sinless Lakṣmaṇa, who is full of compassion to all created beings, always renders the best form of service to Rāma. (Thus) there is gain (alone) to that high-souled prince. (5) The daughter of the ruler of the Videhas (too), who is worthy of (all) comfort, is following your pious-minded son, even though aware of the suffering attendant upon forest life. (6) What blessing has not been secured by your powerful son, who is all virtue and is pledged to the vow of truthfulness, and the banner of whose fame flutters throughout the world? (7)

व्यक्तं रामस्य विज्ञाय शौचं माहात्म्यमुत्तमम् । न गात्रमंशुभिः सूर्यः संतापयितुमर्हति ॥८॥
शिवः सर्वेषु कालेषु काननेभ्यो विनिस्सृतः । राघवं युक्तशीतोष्णः सेविष्यति सुखोऽनिलः ॥९॥
शयानमनघं रात्रौ पितेवाभिपरिष्वजन् । घर्मघ्नः संस्पृशञ्छीतश्चन्द्रमा ह्लादयिष्यति ॥१०॥
ददौ चास्त्राणि दिव्यानि यस्मै ब्रह्मा महौजसे । दानवेन्द्रं हतं दृष्ट्वा तिमिध्वजसुतं रणे ॥११॥
स शूरः पुरुषव्याघ्रः स्वबाहुबलमाश्रितः । असंत्रस्तो ह्यरण्येऽसौ वेश्मनीव निवत्स्यते ॥१२॥
यस्येषुपथमासाद्य विनाशं यान्ति शत्रवः । कथं न पृथिवी तस्य शासने स्थातुमर्हति ॥१३॥
या श्रीः शौर्यं च रामस्य या च कल्याणसत्त्वता । निवृत्तारण्यवासः स्वं क्षिप्रं राज्यमवाप्स्यति ॥१४॥

"Fully aware of the purity, which is (so) well known, as well as of the great magnanimity of Rāma, the sun ought not to scorch his person by its rays. (8) A favourable and delightful breeze of moderate heat and cold, blowing from the woods at all times, will render service to Rāma. (9) Gently stroking him (with its rays) when he is reposing at night, and hugging him like a father, and driving away the heat (of the day), the cool moon will exhilarate the sinless Rāma. (10) Relying solely on the might of his arms, that heroic prince, a (veritable) tiger among men,—on whom, endowed with great strength, Sage Viśwāmitra (a Brahman who vied with Brahmā in creating a world of his own) bestowed celestial missiles on seeing the demon Subāhu (son of Śambara, whose banner bore the device of a large fish), the chief of demons, killed on the battle-field (by Rāma),—will surely dwell undaunted in the forest as in his own palace. (11-12) How can the earth fail to obey the command of Rāma, to whose shafts the enemies fall an easy prey? (13) The splendour that invests Śrī Rāma, the valour that is natural to him and the beneficent strength that resides in him lead one to believe that when the term of his exile in the forest has concluded he will speedily regain his throne. (14)

सूर्यस्यापि भवेत् सूर्यो ह्यग्नेरग्निः प्रभोः प्रभुः । श्रियाः श्रीश्च भवेदग्र्या कीर्त्याः कीर्तिः क्षमाक्षमा ॥१५॥
दैवतं देवतानां च भूतानां भूतसत्तमः । तस्य के ह्यगुणा देवि वने वाप्यथवा पुरे ॥१६॥
पृथिव्या सह वैदेह्या श्रिया च पुरुषर्षभः । क्षिप्रं तिसृभिरेताभिः सह रामोऽभिषेक्ष्यते ॥१७॥
दुःखजं विसृजत्यश्रु निष्क्रामन्तमुदीक्ष्य यम् । अयोध्यायां जनः सर्वः शोकवेगसमाहितः ॥१८॥
कुशचीरधरं वीरं गच्छन्तमपराजितम् । सीतेवानुगता लक्ष्मीस्तस्य किं नाम दुर्लभम् ॥१९॥
धनुर्ग्रहवरो यस्य बाणखड्गास्त्रभृत् स्वयम् । लक्ष्मणो व्रजति ह्यग्रे तस्य किं नाम दुर्लभम् ॥२०॥
निवृत्तवनवासं तं द्रष्टासि पुनरागतम् । जहि शोकं च मोहं च देवि सत्यं ब्रवीमि ते ॥२१॥
शिरसा चरणावेतौ वन्दमानमनिन्दिते । पुनर्द्रक्ष्यसि कल्याणि पुत्रं चन्द्रमिवोदितम् ॥२२॥
पुनः प्रविष्टं दृष्ट्वा तमभिषिक्तं महाश्रियम् । समुत्स्रक्ष्यसि नेत्राभ्यां शीघ्रमानन्दजं जलम् ॥२३॥
मा शोको देवि दुःखं वा न रामे दृश्यतेऽशिवम् । क्षिप्रं द्रक्ष्यसि पुत्रं त्वं ससीतं सहलक्ष्मणम् ॥२४॥

"Indeed he is the illuminator of the sun (which illumines the whole universe), the fire (revealer) of fire, the ruler of rulers, the foremost splendour of splendour, the glory (essence) of glory and the forbearance

(the sustaining power) of forbearance. (15) Nay, he is the god (adored) of gods, the foremost being of all beings. Indeed what handicaps can there be for him in the forest or in Ayodhya, O queen ? (16) Assuredly the aforesaid Rāma, a jewel among men, will soon be installed on the throne along with the following three, *viz*, Mother Earth (a Consort of Lord Viṣṇu), Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) and Śrī (the Goddess of Fortune, another Consort of Lord Viṣṇu, whom Rāma represents). (17) Perceiving him departing (from Ayodhya), all the people in Ayodhya shed tears of agony, smitten as they were with an upsurge of grief. (18) (Nay) Sītā, who is a compeer of Lakṣmī, followed the invincible hero (even) as he departed (for the forest) clad in a garment of the sacred Kuśa grass. Indeed what can be difficult to obtain for him ? (19) In fact, what can be hard to obtain for him at whose head indeed walks Lakṣmaṇa himself, the foremost of bowmen, wielding a sword, arrows and (other) missiles ? (20) O queen, I tell you the truth: you will (be able to) see Rāma come back (to Ayodhya) on having concluded the term of his exile in the forest. (Pray) abandon grief and infatuation. (21) You will again see your son,—as one sees the rising moon,—saluting these feet (of yours) with his head bent low, O blessed and irreproachable lady ! (22) Seeing him (returned to the palace) and installed on the throne and invested with extraordinary splendour you will soon (begin to) shed tears of joy in profusion. (23) Let there be no grief nor sorrow (with regard to Rāma), O queen; (for) no ill luck is seen in Rāma. (Nay) you will soon behold your son accompanied by Sītā and by Lakṣmaṇa. (24)

त्वयाशेषो जनश्चायं समाश्वास्यो यतोऽनघे । किमिदानीमिदं देवि करोषि हृदि विक्लवम् ॥२५॥
नार्हा त्वं शोचितुं देवि यस्यास्ते राघवः सुतः । नहि रामात् परो लोके विद्यते सत्पथे स्थितः ॥२६॥
अभिवादयमानं तं दृष्ट्वा ससुहृदं सुतम् । मुदाश्रु मोक्ष्यसे क्षिप्रं मेघरेखेव वार्षिकी ॥२७॥
पुत्रस्ते वरदः क्षिप्रमयोध्यां पुनरागतः । कराभ्यां मृदुपीनाभ्यां चरणौ पीडयिष्यति ॥२८॥
अभिवाद्य नमस्यन्तं शूरं ससुहृदं सुतम् । मुदास्रैः प्रोक्षसे पुत्रं मेघराजिरिवाचलम् ॥२९॥
आश्वासयन्ती विविधैश्च वाक्यैर्वाक्योपचारे कुशलानवद्या ।
रामस्य तां मातरमेवमुक्त्वा देवी सुमित्रा विरराम रामा ॥३०॥
निशम्य तल्लक्ष्मणमातृवाक्यं रामस्य मातुर्नरदेवपत्न्याः ।
सद्यः शरीरे विननाश शोकः शरद्गतो मेघ इवाल्पतोयः ॥३१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुश्चत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४४ ॥

"Since all these people (stricken with agony caused by separation from Rāma) too deserve to be comforted by you, O sinless one, why do you harbour such grief in your heart at this moment, O godly lady ? (25) You, O queen, whose son is Rāma (a scion of Raghu), ought not to grieve; for none is more devoted to the right path in the world than Rāma. (26) Seeing your aforesaid son greeting you with his friends, you will at once begin to shed tears through joy in the same way as a mass of monsoon clouds would pour rain. (27) Returned soon to Ayodhya, your son, who is capable of bestowing boons, will press your feet with his tender and fleshy hands. (28) Seeing your valiant son saluting you with his friends after accosting you with reverence, you will bathe him in tears shed through joy (even) as a mass of clouds would drench a mountain." (29) Having spoken to Śrī Rāma's celebrated mother as aforesaid, the charming and faultless Queen Sumitrā, who was a pastmaster in eloquence and was busy consoling her through various modes of expression, became silent. (30) On hearing that speech of Sumitrā (Lakṣmaṇa's mother) the grief that had repercussions on the body of Queen Kausalyā, the mother of Śrī Rāma, quickly disappeared like an autumnal cloud containing meagre water. (31)

Thus ends Canto Forty-four in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLV

When the citizens that followed Śrī Rāma in his journey to the forest refuse to return even when requested by Śrī Rāma in many ways, unable as they were to bear separation from him, Śrī Rāma with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa gets down from his chariot and begins to walk. The citizens try to deflect him from his course and persuade him to return, but in vain. At the close of the day they all reach the bank of the Tamasā.

अनुरक्ता महात्मानं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् । अनुजग्मुः प्रयान्तं तं वनवासाय मानवाः ॥ १ ॥
निवर्तितेऽतीव बलात् सुहृद्धर्मेण राजनि । नैव ते संन्यवर्तन्त रामस्यानुगता रथम् ॥ २ ॥
अयोध्यानिलयानां हि पुरुषाणां महायशाः । बभूव गुणसम्पन्नः पूर्णचन्द्र इव प्रियः ॥ ३ ॥
स याच्यमानः काकुत्स्थस्ताभिः प्रकृतिभिस्तदा । कुर्वाणः पितरं सत्यं वनमेवान्वपद्यत ॥ ४ ॥
अवेक्षमाणः सस्नेहं चक्षुषा प्रपिबन्निव । उवाच रामः सस्नेहं ताः प्रजाः स्वाः प्रजा इव ॥ ५ ॥
या प्रीतिर्बहुमानश्च मय्ययोध्यानिवासिनाम् । मत्प्रियार्थं विशेषेण भरते सा विधीयताम् ॥ ६ ॥
स हि कल्याणचारित्रः कैकेय्यानन्दवर्धनः । करिष्यति यथावद् वः प्रियाणि च हितानि च ॥ ७ ॥
ज्ञानवृद्धो वयोबालो मृदुर्वीर्यगुणान्वितः । अनुरूपः स वो भर्ता भविष्यति भयापहः ॥ ८ ॥
स हि राजगुणैर्युक्तो युवराजः समीक्षितः । अपि चापि मया शिष्टैः कार्यं वो भर्तृशासनम् ॥ ९ ॥
न संतप्येद् यथा चासौ वनवासं गते मयि । महाराजस्तथा कार्यो मम प्रियचिकीर्षया ॥१०॥

People devoted to the high-souled Śrī Rāma of unfailing prowess followed him on his way to the forest for exile. (1) Even when the king was made to return much against his will, governed as he was by the code of conduct prescribed for friends and relations (accompanying a departing friend to some distance only), they would not return on any account and continued to follow the chariot; for Śrī Rāma, who enjoyed great celebrity and was richly endowed with excellences, had become the favourite like the full moon of the people residing in Ayodhya. (2-3) Even though being implored by those (devoted) people (to return), the said Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) pressed on to the forest only, (thereby) proving his father to be true (to his word). (4) Fondly gazing on those people as though drinking them with his eyes, Śrī Rāma lovingly spoke to them (as follows) as though they were his own children :—(5) "The love and high esteem that has been bestowed upon me by you (the inhabitants of Ayodhya) may for my pleasure be bestowed in a special measure on Bharata. (6) For, Bharata, who enhances the delight of Kaikeyī and who is possessed of an excellent conduct will properly do things which are not only pleasing but conducive to your (best) interests too. (7) Elderly in wisdom, though juvenile in age, tender though adorned with heroic qualities, he will prove to be a worthy master and will dispel your fears. (8) Endowed as he is with kingly virtues, he has been thought fit to be the Prince Regent. For this reason too the behest of your master must be carried out by you and also because you are enjoined by me. (9) Moreover, with intent to oblige me, the said emperor should be treated by you in such a way that he may not suffer agony when I have gone into exile to the forest." (10)

यथा यथा दाशरथिर्धर्ममेवाश्रितो भवेत् । तथा तथा प्रकृतयो रामं पतिमकामयन् ॥११॥
बाष्पेण पिहितं दीनं रामः सौमित्रिणा सह । चकर्षेव गुणैर्बद्धं जनं पुरनिवासिनम् ॥१२॥
ते द्विजास्त्रिविधं वृद्धा ज्ञानेन वयसौजसा । वयःप्रकम्पशिरसो दूरादूचुरिदं वचः ॥१३॥
वहन्तो जवना रामं भो भो जात्यास्तुरङ्गमाः । निवर्तध्वं न गन्तव्यं हिता भवत भर्तरि ॥१४॥
कर्णवन्ति हि भूतानि विशेषेण तुरंगमाः । यूयं तस्मान्निवर्तध्वं याचनां प्रतिवेदिताः ॥१५॥
धर्मतः स विशुद्धात्मा वीरः शुभदृढव्रतः । उपवाह्यस्तु वो भर्ता नापवाह्यः पुराद् वनम् ॥१६॥
एवमार्तप्रलापांस्तान् वृद्धान् प्रलपतो द्विजान् । अवेक्ष्य सहसा रामो रथादवततार ह ॥१७॥
पद्भ्यामेव जगामाथ ससीतः सहलक्ष्मणः । संनिकृष्टपदन्यासो रामो वनपरायणः ॥१८॥
द्विजातीन् हि पदातींस्तान् रामश्चारित्रवत्सलः । न शशाक घृणाचक्षुः परिमोक्तुं रथेन सः ॥१९॥
गच्छन्तमेव तं दृष्ट्वा रामं सम्भ्रान्तमानसाः । ऊचुः परमसंतप्ता रामं वाक्यमिदं द्विजाः ॥२०॥

The more did Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha) hold fast to righteousness (in the form of obedience to his father's wishes) the more did the people desire him to be their ruler. (11) Śrī Rāma with Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) drew as it were by their virtues the residents of Ayodhya,—who were afflicted and covered with tears,—as though bound with cords. (12) (Of them) such Brahmans as were senior in three ways, *viz*, in point of wisdom, age and power acquired through asceticism, and whose heads were shaking under the weight of senility, spoke from a distance as follows (unable as they were to keep pace with the chariot of Śrī Rāma) :—(13) "Return, O swift steeds of excellent breed drawing the chariot conveying Śrī Rāma, and be friendly to your master (since by taking Śrī Rāma against our wishes you will be doing a disservice to him); you ought not to proceed further. (14) Indeed (all) created beings which are endowed with ears, more so horses, stand apprised of our entreaty. Therefore please return. (15) The said master of yours is exceedingly pure-minded, heroic and a man of virtuous and firm resolve. As such he justly deserves to be conveyed by you nearer the city and not to be carried away from the city to the forest." (16) Perceiving those aged Brahmans uttering such plaintive words, Śrī Rāma precipitately got down from the chariot: so the tradition goes. (17) Taking close strides (in order to enable the aged Brahmans to overtake him), Śrī Rāma now proceeded on foot with Sītā and with Lakṣmaṇa in the direction of the forest, which constituted his final destination (without stopping or receding to meet and console the Brahmans since that would amount to a breach of the vow undertaken by him to depart for the forest). (18) For, the said Śrī Rāma, who was affectionate by disposition and had compassion in his eyes, could not send back those Brahmans walking on foot while continuing to be in the chariot himsey. (19) Perplexed in mind, nay, sore distressed to see the celebrated Śrī Rāma still pressing on, the Brahmans spoke to him as follows :—(20)

ब्राह्मण्यं कृत्स्नमेतत् त्वां ब्रह्मण्यमनुगच्छति । द्विजस्कन्धाधिरूढास्त्वामग्नयोऽप्यनुयान्त्यमी ॥२१॥
वाजपेयसमुत्थानिच्छत्राण्येतानि पश्य नः । पृष्ठतोऽनुप्रयातानि मेघानिव जलात्यये ॥२२॥
अनवाप्तातपत्रस्य रश्मिसंतापितस्य ते । एभिश्छायां करिष्यामः स्वैश्छत्रैर्वाजपेयकैः ॥२३॥
या हि नः सततं बुद्धिर्वेदमन्त्रानुसारिणी । त्वत्कृते सा कृता वत्स वनवासानुसारिणी ॥२४॥
हृदयेष्ववतिष्ठन्ते वेदा ये नः परं धनम् । वत्स्यन्त्यपि गृहेष्वेव दाराश्चारित्ररक्षिताः ॥२५॥
पुनर्न निश्चयः कार्यस्त्वद्गतौ सुकृता मतिः । त्वयि धर्मव्यपेक्षे तु किं स्याद् धर्मपथे स्थितम् ॥२६॥

"The whole of this Brahman community is following you, devoted (as you are) to the Brahmans. (Nay) borne on the shoulders of the Brahmans (through the medium of the two pieces of wood used for kindling the fire by attrition and the vessel intended for holding it), these sacred fires too are following them. (21) (Pray) look at these canopies* obtained by us during the performance of a Vājapeya sacrifice and following at your heels like (white) clouds appearing in autumn (marking the end of the monsoon). (22) With these canopies of ours, obtained during a Vājapeya sacrifice, we shall give shade to you, who have got no canopy and (as such) are being scorched with rays (of the sun). (23) Indeed that mind of ours, which was (heretofore) engaged in pursuing the study of Vedic texts has (now) been made to follow the course of exile to the forest for your sake, O darling! (24) The Vedas, which constitute our supreme riches, stand preserved in our hearts (memory); and protected by their character, our consorts too will (continue to) stay in our homes alone. (We need not therefore be deterred by any anxiety on their score). (25) No decision need be taken by us (on the matter) afresh, (since) our mind is fully determined to follow you (to the forest). Yet (we should like to tell you that) in the event of your turning indifferent to piety (in the form of listening to the advice of Brahmans), what being will remain devoted to the path of virtue? (26)

याचितो नो निवर्तस्व हंसशुक्लशिरोरुहैः । शिरोभिर्निभृताचार महीपतनपांसुलैः ॥२७॥
बहूनां वितता यज्ञा द्विजानां य इहागताः । तेषां समाप्तिरायत्ता तव वत्स निवर्तने ॥२८॥
भक्तिमन्तीह भूतानि जंगमाजंगमानि च । याचमानेषु तेषु त्वं भक्तिं भक्तेषु दर्शय ॥२९॥
अनुगन्तुमशक्तास्त्वां मूलैरुद्धतवेगिनः । उन्नता वायुवेगेन विक्रोशन्तीव पादपाः ॥३०॥
निश्चेष्टाहारसंचारा वृक्षैकस्थाननिश्चिताः । पक्षिणोऽपि प्रयाचन्ते सर्वभूतानुकम्पिनम् ॥३१॥
एवं विक्रोशतां तेषां द्विजातीनां निवर्तने । ददृशे तमसा तत्र वारयन्तीव राघवम् ॥३२॥

---

* It is laid down in the Vedas that he who performs a Vājapeya sacrifice must be supplied with a white canopy—श्वेतच्छत्री भवति ।

ततः सुमन्त्रोऽपि रथाद् विमुच्य श्रान्तान् हयान् सम्परिवर्त्य शीघ्रम् ।
पीतोदकांस्तोयपरिप्लुताङ्गानचारयद् वै तमसाविदूरे ॥३३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४५ ॥

"Solicited by us with our heads bent low,—heads which are covered with hair white as the down of swans and are soiled with dust as a result of their falling on the ground (in the course of our prostration to you, whom we know to be none other than Lord Viṣṇu),—(pray) turn back, O prince resolute of conduct ! (27) Sacrifices have been started by many of those Brahmans that have come here (to follow you). Their conclusion, O darling, depends on your return. (28) Nay, (all) created beings—both inanimate and animate—here are full of devotion to you. (Pray) show your affection to such devotees, who are imploring you to return (by acceding to their request). (29) Tall trees, whose power of locomotion stands completely hampered by their roots (penetrating deep into the earth) and which are (therefore) unable to follow you, are crying as it were through the creaking sound produced by the force of wind (and thus asking you to return). (30) Birds too, which sit motionless and are unable to go out in search of food and which remain fixed to one spot on (the boughs of) trees, solicit you to return, compassionate as you are to all created beings." (31) While the aforesaid Brahmans were crying thus with a view to persuading Śrī Rāma to return, the river Tamasā came to view as though retarding the progress of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (32) Releasing the horses, fatigued as they were, from the chariot and quickly making them roll afterwards, Sumantra too allowed them to graze not very far from (the bank of) the Tamasā once they had drunk water and had their body washed in the river. (33)

Thus ends Canto Forty-five in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षट्चत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLVI

Having reached the bank of the Tamasā and thinking of the plight of the people of Ayodhya, Śrī Rāma lays himself down on a bed of leaves bewailing the lot of his parents and feeling reassured by the thought of Bharata's noble qualities; while Lakṣmaṇa opens his dialogue with Sumantra on the divine excellences of Śrī Rāma. Waking up in the meantime, Śrī Rāma urges the charioteer-minister to drive the chariot in such a way as to put the citizens that had accompanied them off the scent and lead them to think that the chariot had turned back towards Ayodhya instead of proceeding towards the forest. He then mounts the chariot along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa and presses on to the forest.

ततस्तु तमसातीरं रम्यमाश्रित्य राघवः । सीतामुद्वीक्ष्य सौमित्रिमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥

इयमद्य निशा पूर्वा सौमित्रे प्रहिता वनम् । वनवासस्य भद्रं ते न चोत्कण्ठितुमर्हसि ॥ २ ॥
पश्य शून्यान्यरण्यानि रुदन्तीव समन्ततः । यथानिलयमायद्भिर्निलीनानि मृगद्विजैः ॥ ३ ॥
अद्यायोध्या तु नगरी राजधानी पितुर्मम । सस्त्रीपुंसा गतानस्माञ्शोचिष्यति न संशयः ॥ ४ ॥
अनुरक्ता हि मनुजा राजानं बहुभिर्गुणैः । त्वां च मां च नरव्याघ्र शत्रुघ्नभरतौ तथा ॥ ५ ॥
पितरं चानुशोचामि मातरं च यशस्विनीम् । अपि नान्धौ भवेतां नौ रुदन्तौ तावभीक्ष्णशः ॥ ६ ॥
भरतः खलु धर्मात्मा पितरं मातरं च मे । धर्मार्थकामसहितैर्वाक्यैराश्वासयिष्यति ॥ ७ ॥
भरतस्यानृशंसत्वं संचिन्त्याहं पुनः पुनः । नानुशोचामि पितरं मातरं च महाभुज ॥ ८ ॥
त्वया कार्यं नरव्याघ्र मामनुव्रजता कृतम् । अन्वेष्टव्या हि वैदेह्या रक्षणार्थे सहायता ॥ ९ ॥
अद्भिरेव हि सौमित्रे वत्स्याम्यद्य निशामिमाम् । एतद्धि रोचते मह्यं वन्येऽपि विविधे सति ॥१०॥

Then, taking his stand on the delightful bank of the Tamasā and gazing on Sītā, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) spoke to the son of Sumitrā, as follows:—(1) "Today, O Lakṣmaṇa, is the (very) first night of our exile in the forest. And since it is to the forest that we have been sent away, you ought not to feel anxious (for those that have been left behind); my all be well with you! (2) Look here: sought for shelter by beasts and birds retiring to their respective abode, the desolate woods are crying as it were on all sides. (3) The city of Ayodhya, the capital of my father (King Daśaratha), with its men and women will for its part lament today for us (three), that have departed (for the forest): there is no doubt about it. (4) For, the people (of Ayodhya) are devoted to the king no less than to you and myself, as also to Bharata and Śatrughna, for our manifold virtues, O tiger among men! (5) I bewail (the lot of) my father as well as my illustrious mother (Kausalyā). I fear lest those parents of ours, who must be incessantly weeping, should be deprived of their eyesight. (6) I am sure that the pious-minded Bharata will console my father and mother by means of words assuring them of religious merit, material welfare and sense-gratification. (7) Reflecting again and again on the tender-heartedness of Bharata, O mighty-armed prince, I do not lament for my father and mother. (8) By following me (to the forest), O tiger among men, a (great) purpose (of mine) has been served by you; for (otherwise) aid would have to be sought for by me for looking after Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom). (9) I shall certainly live on water alone tonight, O son of Sumitrā! Although there are various kinds of wild fruits and roots, this alone pleases me." (10)

एवमुक्त्वा तु सौमित्रिं सुमन्त्रमपि राघवः । अप्रमत्तस्त्वमश्वेषु भव सौम्येत्युवाच ह ॥११॥
सोऽश्वान् सुमन्त्रः संयम्य सूर्येऽस्तं समुपागते । प्रभूतयवसान् कृत्वा बभूव प्रत्यनन्तरः ॥१२॥
उपास्य तु शिवां संध्यां दृष्ट्वा रात्रिमुपागताम् । रामस्य शयनं चक्रे सूतः सौमित्रिणा सह ॥१३॥
तां शय्यां तमसातीरे वीक्ष्य वृक्षदलैर्वृताम् । रामः सौमित्रिणा सार्धं सभार्यः संविवेश ह ॥१४॥
सभार्यं सम्प्रसुप्तं तु भ्रान्तं सम्प्रेक्ष्य लक्ष्मणः । कथयामास सूताय रामस्य विविधान् गुणान् ॥१५॥
जाग्रतोरेव तां रात्रिं सौमित्रेरुदितो रविः । सूतस्य तमसातीरे रामस्य ब्रुवतो गुणान् ॥१६॥
गोकुलाकुलतीरायास्तमसाया विदूरतः । अवसत् तत्र तां रात्रिं रामः प्रकृतिभिः सह ॥१७॥
उत्थाय च महातेजाः प्रकृतीस्ता निशाम्य च । अब्रवीद् भ्रातरं रामो लक्ष्मणं पुण्यलक्षणम् ॥१८॥

Having told Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) as above, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), so the tradition goes, spoke to Sumantra too as follows:—"Attend you to the horses (now), O good sir!" (11) Fastening the horses tightly, the sun having completely set, and supplying them with abundant grass, the said Sumantra returned (to the presence of Śrī Rāma). (12) Having worshipped (the goddess presiding over) the benign evening twilight (according to his grade in society) and seeing the night fallen, the charioteer along with Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) prepared a ground suitable for Śrī Rāma to sleep on (by brushing aside gravel and particles of dust etc.) as well as a bed (of leaves). (13) Perceiving the aforesaid bed overspread (by Sumantra) with (fresh) leaves of trees on the bank of the Tamasā with the help of Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) Śrī Rāma with his consort lay down on it: so they say. (14) Observing Śrī Rāma buried in deep sleep with his spouse, fatigued as he was, Lakṣmaṇa for his part began to recount the various virtues of Śrī Rāma before the charioteer. (15) The sun rose past Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) even as he was recounting to the charioteer on the bank of the Tamasā the excellences of Śrī Rāma, both (Lakṣmaṇa and Sumantra) keeping awake (the whole of.) that night. (16) At a respectable distance from the Tamasā, whose bank was crowded with herds of cows, Śrī Rāma spent that night with the citizens on the aforesaid stretch of land. (17) Getting up (from the bed) and seeing those people (lying at some distance), Śrī Rāma, who was possessed of extraordinary splendour, spoke (as follows) to his (younger half-) brother, Lakṣmaṇa, who was endowed with auspicious bodily marks:—(18)

अस्मद्व्यपेक्षान् सौमित्रे निर्व्यपेक्षान् गृहेष्वपि । वृक्षमूलेषु संसक्तान् पश्य लक्ष्मण साम्प्रतम् ॥१९॥
यथैते नियमं पौराः कुर्वन्त्यस्मन्निवर्तने ।अपि प्राणान् न्यसिष्यन्ति न तु त्यक्ष्यन्ति निश्चयम्॥२०॥
यावदेव तु संसुप्तास्तावदेव वयं लघु । रथमारुह्य गच्छामः पन्थानमकुतोभयम् ॥२१॥
अतो भूयोऽपि नेदानीमिक्ष्वाकुपुरवासिनः । स्वपेयुरनुरक्ता मा वृक्षमूलेषु संश्रिताः ॥२२॥
पौरा ह्यात्मकृताद् दुःखाद् विप्रमोच्या नृपात्मजैः । न तु खल्वात्मना योज्या दुःखेन पुरवासिनः ॥२३॥
अब्रवील्लक्ष्मणो रामं साक्षाद् धर्ममिव स्थितम् । रोचते मे तथा प्राज्ञ क्षिप्रमारुह्यतामिति ॥२४॥

"Behold, O Lakṣmaṇa, the citizens, full of great longing for us and absolutely unmindful of their homes as also of their near and dear ones, lying close to the roots of trees till this (late) hour, O son of Sumitrā! (19) From the way in which these citizens are taking pains to take us back (to Ayodhya) it seems they will even lay down their lives but would in no case give up their resolve. (20) Therefore, while they are fast asleep let us meantime quickly mount the chariot and take a route which has no fear (of molestation) from any quarter, so that the citizens of Ayodhya (the ancient capital of Ikṣwāku), who are (so keenly) devoted to me, may not henceforth (have to) repose leaning against the roots of trees as now. (21-22) The residents of a city (ruled over by a king) should indeed be completely and finally rid by the sons of their rulers of suffering brought about by (the citizens) themselves. The citizens should on no account be burdened with affliction caused by the princes themselves as in our case." (23) Lakṣmaṇa replied as follows to Śrī Rāma, who was firm as virtue incarnate:—"What you say appeals to me, O wise brother; (pray) ascend the chariot quickly." (24)

अथ रामोऽब्रवीत् सूतं शीघ्रं संयुज्यतां रथः । गमिष्यामि ततोऽरण्यं गच्छ शीघ्रमितः प्रभो ॥२५॥
सूतस्ततः संत्वरितः स्यन्दनं तैर्हयोत्तमैः । योजयित्वा तु रामस्य प्राञ्जलिः प्रत्यवेदयत् ॥२६॥
अयं युक्तो महाबाहो रथस्ते रथिनां वर । त्वरयाऽऽरोह भद्रं ते ससीतः सहलक्ष्मणः ॥२७॥
तं स्यन्दनमधिष्ठाय राघवः सपरिच्छदः । शीघ्रगामाकुलावर्तां तमसामतरन्नदीम् ॥२८॥
स संतीर्य महाबाहुः श्रीमाञ्शिवमकण्टकम् । प्रापद्यत महामार्गमभयं भयदर्शिनाम् ॥२९॥
मोहनार्थं तु पौराणां सूतं रामोऽब्रवीद् वचः । उदङ्मुखः प्रयाहि त्वं रथमारुह्य सारथे ॥३०॥
मुहूर्तं त्वरितं गत्वा निवर्तय रथं पुनः । यथा न विद्युः पौरा मां तथा कुरु समाहितः ॥३१॥

Śrī Rāma then said to the charioteer, "Please get the chariot ready soon. On it I shall proceed to the forest. Depart from this place at once, my lord!" (25) Having got the chariot ready with those excellent horses yoked to it with great expedition, the charioteer for his part thereupon submitted (as follows) with joined palms to Śrī Rāma:—(26) "Here is your chariot ready, O mighty-armed prince! (Pray) ascend it quickly with Sītā and with Lakṣmaṇa, O jewel among car-warriors; may prosperity attend you!" (27) Mounting the aforesaid chariot with (all) necessaries for travelling (*viz*, his bow, armour, quiver, spade, basket and so on), Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) speedily crossed (thereby) the swift-going Tamasā thickly set with eddies. (28) Having duly crossed the stream, the glorious Śrī Rāma (who was possessed of mighty arms) reached a smooth road, free from obstacles and safe even for those who are apprehensive of danger. (29) With a view to putting the citizens off the scent, Śrī Rāma for his part spoke to the charioteer as follows:—"Mounting the chariot (alone), O charioteer, proceed you northward and, going apace awhile, bring the chariot back again. Remaining careful, drive the chariot in such a way that the citizens may not (be able to) locate me." (30-31)

रामस्य तु वचः श्रुत्वा तथा चक्रे स सारथिः । प्रत्यागम्य च रामस्य स्यन्दनं प्रत्यवेदयत् ॥३२॥
तौ सम्प्रयुक्तं तु रथं समास्थितौ तदा ससीतौ रघुवंशवर्धनौ ।
प्रचोदयामास ततस्तुरंगमान् स सारथिर्येन पथा तपोवनम् ॥३३॥
ततः समास्थाय रथं महारथः ससारथिर्दाशरथिर्वनं ययौ ।
उदङ्मुखं तं तु रथं चकार प्रयाणमाङ्गल्यनिमित्तदर्शनात् ॥३४॥
इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षट्चत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४६ ॥

Hearing the command of Śrī Rāma, the said charioteer for his part did as he was told and, returning (by a different route) reported to Śrī Rāma the arrival of the chariot. (32) Then Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the promoters of the race of Raghu) for their part along with Sītā comfortably took their seats in the chariot, which was duly kept ready (by the charioteer for their use). The said charioteer thereupon urged the horses along the route by which they could reach a forest suited to the practice of austerities. (33) Having duly occupied the chariot, Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha), who was a great car-warrior, thereupon proceeded to the forest along with the charioteer. At the outset, (however) the charioteer placed the chariot facing the north; for he saw omens auspicious for journey (in that quarter). (34)

Thus ends Canto Forty-six in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLVII

The citizens that had followed Śrī Rāma in his journey to the forest wake to find Śrī Rāma and his party gone and begin to reproach themselves. Overcome with grief they hunt up the tracks of his chariot; but unable to find them, they helplessly return to Ayodhya in utter despondency.

प्रभातायां तु शर्वर्यां पौरास्ते राघवं विना । शोकोपहतनिश्चेष्टा बभूवुर्हतचेतसः ॥ १ ॥
शोकजाश्रुपरिद्यूना वीक्षमाणास्ततस्ततः । आलोकमपि रामस्य न पश्यन्ति स्म दुःखिताः ॥ २ ॥
ते विषादार्तवदना रहितास्तेन धीमता । कृपणाः करुणा वाचो वदन्ति स्म मनीषिणः ॥ ३ ॥

The night having ended in dawn, the aforesaid citizens, who were stunned with grief, became unconscious (as it were). (1) Made miserable by tears born of grief and full of agony, they could not catch even a glimpse of Śrī Rāma, though casting their eyes all round. (2) Their faces withered through despondency, deprived as they were of Śrī Rāma (who was full of wisdom), and (therefore) non-plussed, the citizens, even though they were wise, uttered plaintive words (as follows):—(3)

धिगस्तु खलु निद्रां तां ययापहृतचेतसः । नाद्य पश्यामहे रामं पृथूरस्कं महाभुजम् ॥ ४ ॥
कथं रामो महाबाहुः स तथावितथक्रियः । भक्तं जनमभित्यज्य प्रवासं तापसो गतः ॥ ५ ॥
यो नः सदा पालयति पिता पुत्रानिवौरसान् । कथं रघूणां स श्रेष्ठस्त्यक्त्वा नो विपिनं गतः ॥ ६ ॥
इहैव निधनं याम महाप्रस्थानमेव वा । रामेण रहितानां नो किमर्थं जीवितं हितम् ॥ ७ ॥
सन्ति शुष्काणि काष्ठानि प्रभूतानि महान्ति च । तैः प्रज्वाल्य चितां सर्वे प्रविशामोऽथवा वयम् ॥ ८ ॥
किं वक्ष्यामो महाबाहुरनसूयः प्रियंवदः । नीतः स राघवोऽस्माभिरिति वक्तुं कथं क्षमम् ॥ ९ ॥
सा नूनं नगरी दीना दृष्ट्वास्मान् राघवं विना । भविष्यति निरानन्दा सस्त्रीबालवयोऽधिका ॥ १० ॥
निर्यातास्तेन वीरेण सह नित्यं महात्मना । विहीनास्तेन च पुनः कथं द्रक्ष्याम तां पुरीम् ॥ ११ ॥

"Woe indeed be to that slumber, rendered unconscious by which we could not perceive today Śrī Rāma, who is distinguished by a broad chest and mighty arms ! (4) How did that mighty-armed Śrī Rāma, whose actions, as is well known, are never ineffectual, leave for other lands in the garb of an ascetic, abandoning (us) his devoted subjects ? (5) How did that jewel among the Raghus, who ever protected us as a father does his own children, proceed to the forest abandoning us ? (6) Let us meet our end at this very place (by fasting) or definitely set out on the grand journey (to the north with a resolve to die). For what purpose can life be good for us, deprived as we are of Śrī Rāma ? (7) Or there are any number of big logs of dry wood (here). Lighting a funeral pile, let us all enter the fire (simultaneously). (8) Shall we break the news (when asked by those left behind in Ayodhya) that Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) of mighty arms, who is free from jealousy and speaks kindly (to all), has been conveyed to the forest by us ? How can such words be uttered by us? (9) Seeing us (back) without Śrī Rāma, that city (of Ayodhya) will surely assume a wretched and cheerless aspect with its womenfolk, children and elderly people. (10) How shall we, who went out with that high-souled hero for good, can behold that city again without him?" (11)

इतीव बहुधा वाचो बाहुमुद्यम्य ते जनाः । विलपन्ति स्म दुःखार्ता हृतवत्सा इवाग्र्यगाः ॥१२॥
ततो मार्गानुसारेण गत्वा किंचित् ततः क्षणम् । मार्गनाशाद् विषादेन महता समभिप्लुताः ॥१३॥
रथमार्गानुसारेण न्यवर्तन्त मनस्विनः । किमिदं किं करिष्यामो दैवेनोपहता इति ॥१४॥
तदा यथागतेनैव मार्गेण क्लान्तचेतसः । अयोध्यामगमन् सर्वे पुरीं व्यथितसज्जनाम् ॥१५॥
आलोक्य नगरीं तां च क्षयव्याकुलमानसाः । आवर्तयन्त तेऽश्रूणि नयनैः शोकपीडितैः ॥१६॥
एषा रामेण नगरी रहिता नातिशोभते । आपगा गरुडेनेव ह्रदादुद्धृतपन्नगा ॥१७॥
चन्द्रहीनमिवाकाशं तोयहीनमिवार्णवम् । अपश्यन् निहतानन्दं नगरं ते विचेतसः ॥१८॥
ते तानि वेश्मानि महाधनानि दुःखेन दुःखोपहता विशन्तः ।
नैव प्रजग्मुः स्वजनं परं वा निरीक्षमाणाः प्रविनष्टहर्षाः ॥१९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्तचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४७ ॥

Holding up their arms, the above-mentioned men, who were stricken with agony like cows of excellent breed bereft of their calf, lamented in various ways as above. (12) Then proceeding to some distance along the tracks (left by Śrī Rāma's chariot) for some moments, they were overwhelmed with great despondency, the tracks having disappeared immediately afterwards (due to the chariot having returned by another route). (13) The high-minded citizens (eventually) returned (to Ayodhya) along the tracks left by the chariot (while leaving Ayodhya), saying "How is it (that the tracks have disappeared so soon)? What shall we do? We are doomed by Providence." (14) Depressed in spirits they all then returned, by the same route along which they had come, to the city of Ayodhya, where all good people were feeling distressed. (15) Nay, seeing the city (which presented a sorry spectacle), they shed tears in profusion through their eyes tormented with grief, their mind distracted through cheerlessness. (16) Bereft of Śrī Rāma, the aforesaid city (of Ayodhya) did not look any more charming than a river whose snakes have been uprooted from its pool by Garuḍa. (17) Those bewildered men beheld the city joyless like the firmament bereft of the moon and an ocean without water. (18) Entering their dwellings full of abundant riches with difficulty, the citizens could not distinguish between their own people and others, though casting their eyes all round, stricken as they were with sorrow, their joy having altogether disappeared for good. (19)

Thus ends Canto Forty-seven in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टचत्वारिंशः सर्गः

Canto XLVIII

Told of Śrī Rāma's departure for the forest by the citizens who had gone out with Śrī Rāma and returned, unable as they were to find out the tracks of his chariot, their wives reproach Kaikeyī and break into lamentation.

तेषामेवं विषण्णानां पीडितानामतीव च । बाष्पविप्लुतनेत्राणां सशोकानां मुमूर्षया ॥ १ ॥
अभिगम्य निवृत्तानां रामं नगरवासिनाम् । उद्गतानीव सत्त्वानि बभूवुरमनस्विनाम् ॥ २ ॥
स्वं स्वं निलयमागम्य पुत्रदारैः समावृताः । अश्रूणि मुमुचुः सर्वे बाष्पेण पिहिताननाः ॥ ३ ॥
न चाहृष्यन् न चामोदन् वणिजो न प्रसारयन् । न चाशोभन्त पण्यानि नापचन् गृहमेधिनः ॥ ४ ॥
नष्टं दृष्ट्वा नाभ्यनन्दन् विपुलं वा धनागमम् । पुत्रं प्रथमजं लब्ध्वा जननी नाप्यनन्दत ॥ ५ ॥
गृहे गृहे रुदत्यश्च भर्तारं गृहमागतम् । व्यगर्हयन्त दुःखार्ता वाग्भिस्तोत्त्रैरिव द्विपान् ॥ ६ ॥

The life of those citizens who had returned dejected. and dispirited in this way (even) after meeting Śrī Rāma, and felt sore afflicted—full of grief as they were and seized with a longing to give up the ghost, their eyes overflowing with tears,—became extinct as it were. (1-2) Reaching each his own abode and surrounded by their sons and wife, all shed tears, their face being covered with them. (3) People neither made merry nor did they rejoice. Merchants did not spread their merchandise nor did the salable goods (spread by them) look charming. Nor (again) did the householders cook their food (at their home). (4) The people of Ayodhya did not rejoice to recover their lost property or to receive a large (additional) fortune. Nor did a mother rejoice to meet her first-born male issue. (5) Stricken with sorrow (not to find Śrī Rāma back in Ayodhya) and shedding tears, women in every house sharply reproached (in the following words) their husband returned home (without Śrī Rāma) even as the drivers of elephants would prick them with goads :—(6)

किं नु तेषां गृहैः कार्यं किं दारैः किं धनेन वा । पुत्रैर्वापि सुखैर्वापि ये न पश्यन्ति राघवम् ॥ ७ ॥
एकः सत्पुरुषो लोके लक्ष्मणः सह सीतया । योऽनुगच्छति काकुत्स्थं रामं परिचरन् वने ॥ ८ ॥
आपगाः कृतपुण्यास्ताः पद्मिन्यश्च सरांसि च । येषु यास्यति काकुत्स्थो विगाह्य सलिलं शुचि ॥ ९ ॥
शोभयिष्यन्ति काकुत्स्थमटव्यो रम्यकाननाः । आपगाश्च महानूपाः सानुमन्तश्च पर्वताः ॥१०॥
काननं वापि शैलं वा यं रामोऽनुगमिष्यति । प्रियातिथिमिव प्राप्तं नैनं शक्ष्यत्यनर्चितुम् ॥११॥
विचित्रकुसुमापीडा बहुमञ्जरिधारिणः । राघवं दर्शयिष्यन्ति नगा भ्रमरशालिनः ॥१२॥
अकाले चापि मुख्यानि पुष्पाणि च फलानि च । दर्शयिष्यन्त्यनुक्रोशाद् गिरयो राममागतम् ॥१३॥
प्रस्रविष्यन्ति तोयानि विमलानि महीधराः । विदर्शयन्तो विविधान् भूयश्चित्रांश्च निर्झरान् ॥१४॥
पादपाः पर्वताग्रेषु रमयिष्यन्ति राघवम् । यत्र रामो भयं नात्र नास्ति तत्र पराभवः ॥१५॥

"What purpose of theirs who do not behold Śrī Rāma will be served by their dwellings, wife or even riches or even sons or even pleasures? (7) The only virtuous man in this world is Lakṣmaṇa, who with Sītā has followed Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), rendering service to him in the forest. (8) Fortunate too are those rivers, lotus-ponds and lakes, bathing in whose sacred waters Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) will proceed (further)! (9) Forests with delightful rows of trees, as well as rivers, tracts of land abounding in water and mountains with beautiful peaks will adorn (the presence of) Śrī Rāma. (10) The forest or mountain which Śrī Rāma will visit will not fail to honour him like a beloved guest arrived near. (11) Trees crowned with flowers of various kinds and bearing numerous bunches of flowers and adorned with black bees will appear before Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (12) Out of regard mountains will display before Śrī Rāma as he visits them excellent blossoms and fruits too even out of season. (13) Bringing to light picturesque cascades of various kinds, mountains will further release crystal waters. (14) Trees standing on mountain-tops will afford delight to Śrī Rāma. (And) there is no (cause for) fear where Śrī Rāma is, nor is there any (occasion for) humiliation. (15)

स हि शूरो महाबाहुः पुत्रो दशरथस्य च । पुरा भवति नोऽदूरादनुगच्छाम राघवम् ॥१६॥
पादच्छाया सुखं भर्तुस्तादृशस्य महात्मनः । स हि नाथो जनस्यास्य स गतिः स परायणम् ॥१७॥
वयं परिचरिष्यामः सीतां यूयं च राघवम् । इति पौरस्त्रियो भर्तॄन् दुःखार्तास्तत्तदब्रुवन् ॥१८॥
युष्माकं राघवोऽरण्ये योगक्षेमं विधास्यति । सीता नारीजनस्यास्य योगक्षेमं करिष्यति ॥१९॥
को न्वनेनाप्रतीतेन सोत्कण्ठितजनेन च । सम्प्रीयेतामनोज्ञेन वासेन हृतचेतसा ॥२०॥
कैकेय्या यदि चेद् राज्यं स्यादधर्म्यमनाथवत् । न हि नो जीवितेनार्थः कुतः पुत्रैः कुतो धनैः ॥२१॥
यया पुत्रश्च भर्ता च त्यक्तावैश्वर्यकारणात् । कं सा परिहरेदन्यं कैकेयी कुलपांसनी ॥२२॥
कैकेय्या न वयं राज्ये भृतका हि वसेमहि । जीवन्त्या जातु जीवन्त्यः पुत्रैरपि शपामहे ॥२३॥

"That heroic and mighty-armed son of Daśaratha will surely come to our view not far from this place. Let us (once more) follow Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (16) The shelter of the feet of such a high-souled master (as Śrī Rāma is) is our (only) joy; in fact he is the protector of us (all); he is our goal, he is our supreme asylum. (17) We shall attend on Sītā, while you shall serve Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu)." In so many words did the citizens' wives, stricken with agony, address their husbands. (18) "Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu)," (they continued,) "will satisfy your needs and safeguard your interests in the forest, while Sītā will do the same thing with regard to us womenfolk. (19) Who can possibly remain highly pleased with residence in this city, which is not commendable (in any way),—much less agreeable to the mind, the people here being full of longing (for the return of Śrī Rāma),—and by which the mind gets unsettled? (20) If there comes to be the rule of Kaikeyī, which will not be in consonance with righteousness and which will be as good as without a protector, surely no use will be left for our life, much less for our sons and riches. (21) Whom else would that Kaikeyī,—who has brought disgrace to her family and by whom her (step-) son and husband too have been forsaken for the sake of power—not abandon? (22) We swear by our sons that so long as we breathe we can under no circumstances live in the kingdom of Kaikeyī, till she is alive, even though we may be supported by her. (23)

या पुत्रं पार्थिवेन्द्रस्य प्रवासयति निर्घृणा । कस्तां प्राप्य सुखं जीवेदधर्म्यां दुष्टचारिणीम् ॥२४॥
उपद्रुतमिदं सर्वमनालम्भमनायकम् । कैकेय्यास्तु कृते सर्वं विनाशमुपयास्यति ॥२५॥

नहि प्रव्रजिते रामे जीविष्यति महीपतिः । मृते दशरथे व्यक्तं विलोपस्तदनन्तरम् ॥२६॥
ते विषं पिबतालोड्य क्षीणपुण्याः सुदुःखिताः । राघवं वानुगच्छध्वमश्रुतिं वापि गच्छत ॥२७॥
मिथ्याप्रव्राजितो रामः सभार्यः सहलक्ष्मणः । भरते संनिबद्धाः स्मः सौनिके पशवो यथा ॥२८॥
पूर्णचन्द्राननः श्यामो गूढजत्रुररिंदमः । आजानुबाहुः पद्माक्षो रामो लक्ष्मणपूर्वजः ॥२९॥
पूर्वाभिभाषी मधुरः सत्यवादी महाबलः । सौम्यश्च सर्वलोकस्य चन्द्रवत् प्रियदर्शनः ॥३०॥
नूनं पुरुषशार्दूलो मत्तमातङ्गविक्रमः । शोभयिष्यत्यरण्यानि विचरन् स महारथः ॥३१॥

"Who can live happily on having obtained (as one's sovereign) that impious woman of wicked conduct who has sent into exile Prince Rāma (son of Daśaratha, a ruler of rulers), merciless as she is ? (24) The whole of this kingdom is (soon) going to be deprived of its ruler; it will no longer have any sacrificial performances and will be visited by calamities. Nay, thanks to Kaikeyī, everything will meet with ruination. (25) For, Śrī Rāma having gone into exile, the emperor will not survive and when Daśaratha is dead destruction will be the fate of the distinguished kingdom which has run an uninterrupted course (ever since the time of Ikṣwāku). (26) Therefore drink poison mixing it with water, sore distressed as you are, (the stock of) your merit having been exhausted; or follow Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) to the forest or leave for some land where (even) the name of Kaikeyī may not reach your ears. (27) Śrī Rāma along with his consort (Sītā) and with Lakṣmaṇa (his younger brother) has been deceitfully sent into exile and we have been tied firm to the apron-strings of Bharata in the same way as animals are bound tightly together (for being slaughtered) in a shambles. (28) That lotus-eyed great car-warrior, Śrī Rāma, elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa,—a tiger among men and a subduer of foes,—who is dark-brown of complexion and has a countenance resembling the full moon, (nay) whose collar-bone is invisible (because of its being covered with flesh), whose arms extend up to the knees, who takes the initiative in speaking, is sweet of expression, truthful of speech and possessed of extraordinary might, is easy of address to all people and is delightful of aspect as the moon, and whose gait resembles that of an elephant in rut, will surely adorn the woods while roaming (through them)." (29-31)

तास्तथा विलपन्त्यस्तु नगरे नागरस्त्रियः । चुक्रुशुर्दुःखसंतप्ता मृत्योरिव भयागमे ॥३२॥
इत्येवं विलपन्तीनां स्त्रीणां वेश्मसु राघवम् । जगामास्तं दिनकरो रजनी चाभ्यवर्तत ॥३३॥
नष्टज्वलनसंतापा प्रशान्ताध्यायसत्कथा । तिमिरेणानुलिप्तेव तदा सा नगरी बभौ ॥३४॥
उपशान्तवणिक्पण्या नष्टहर्षा निराश्रया । अयोध्या नगरी चासीन्नष्टतारमिवाम्बरम् ॥३५॥
तदा स्त्रियो रामनिमित्तमातुरा यथा सुते भ्रातरि वा विवासिते ।
विलप्य दीना रुरुदुर्विचेतसः सुतैर्हि तासामधिकोऽपि सोऽभवत् ॥३६॥
प्रशान्तेगीतोत्सवनृत्यवादना विभ्रष्टहर्षा पिहितापणोदया ।
तदा ह्ययोध्या नगरी बभूव सा महार्णवः संक्षपितोदको यथा ॥३७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टचत्वारिंशः सर्गः ॥ ४८ ॥

Lamenting thus in the city (of Ayodhya), the aforesaid wives of citizens, for their part, cried as one would do at the approach of some danger foreboding death, tormented as they were with agony. (32) The sun sank below the horizon past these women, who had been mourning as aforesaid in their homes for Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), and the night fell. (33) The city (of Ayodhya), in which the kindling of fires (even for the purposes of Agnihotra) had ceased and the chanting of the Vedas and the narration of sacred stories (relating to the Purāṇas) died out, looked as though coated with darkness at that time. (34) The city of Ayodhya,—in which the business of the trading class had been brought to a standstill and whose joy had gone, nay, which had (now) become supportless, looked dark as the sky in which the stars had disappeared. (35) Giving expression to their grief in various ways on that occasion, the women (of Ayodhya), who were sick of mind on account of Śrī Rāma, as one would feel on one's (own) son or brother having been sent into exile, cried miserably and fell unconscious; for Śrī Rāma was dearer to them than their very sons. (36) The celebrated city of Ayodhya,—in which (all) singing, rejoicing, dancing and instrumental music had been completely set at rest, whose delight had fled for ever and the (steady) rise of whose trade had been hampered—looked at that time like an ocean whose waters had dried up. (37)

Thus ends Canto Forty-eight in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकोनपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto XLIX

Having covered a long distance in the meantime Śrī Rāma finishes his morning bath and devotions and, having crossed the Vedaśruti, Gomatī and Syandikā rivers, presses forward talking with Sumantra.

रामोऽपि रात्रिशेषेण तेनैव महदन्तरम् । जगाम पुरुषव्याघ्रः पितुराज्ञामनुस्मरन् ॥ १ ॥
तथैव गच्छतस्तस्य व्यपायाद् रजनी शिवा । उपास्य तु शिवां संध्यां विषयानत्यगाहत ॥ २ ॥
ग्रामान् विकृष्टसीमान्तान् पुष्पितानि वनानि च । पश्यन्नतिययौ शीघ्रं शनैरिव हयोत्तमैः ॥ ३ ॥
शृण्वन् वाचो मनुष्याणां ग्रामसंवासवासिनाम् । राजानं धिग् दशरथं कामस्य वशमास्थितम् ॥ ४ ॥
हा नृशंसाद्य कैकेयी पापा पापानुबन्धिनी । तीक्ष्णा सम्भिन्नमर्यादा तीक्ष्णकर्मणि वर्तते ॥ ५ ॥
या पुत्रमीदृशं राज्ञः प्रवासयति धार्मिकम् । वनवासे महाप्राज्ञं सानुक्रोशं जितेन्द्रियम् ॥ ६ ॥
कथं नाम महाभागा सीता जनकनन्दिनी । सदा सुखेष्वभिरता दुःखान्यनुभविष्यति ॥ ७ ॥
अहो दशरथो राजा निःस्नेहः स्वसुतं प्रति । प्रजानामनघं रामं परित्यक्तुमिहेच्छति ॥ ८ ॥

Revolving (in his mind) the command of his father, Śrī Rāma too, a tiger among men, covered a long distance in the course of the remaining (hours of the) night itself. (1) Even as he drove along with the same alacrity the delightful night passed. Having worshipped the blissful (morning) twilight, he passed beyond a number of territories. (2) Seeing villages whose outskirts had been carefully tilled, and woodlands laden with blossoms, and led by excellent horses, he proceeded apace as though slowly (engrossed as he was in enjoying the sights), hearing (as under) the words of those residing in villages and hamlets (close by):—"Woe unto King Daśaratha, who has fallen into the clutches of concupiscence. (3-4) Ah, the cruel and sinful Kaikeyī, who is hot-tempered and of sinful designs and has transgressed the bounds of propriety, is herself engaged at present in a cruel game in that she has been instrumental in sending into exile in the forest such a pious, highly enlightened, compassionate and self-controlled son of the emperor. (5-6) How will the highly blessed Sītā, daughter of King Janaka, who is ever addicted to comforts, actually suffer hardships? (7) What a pity that King Daśaratha has grown so devoid of affection on this occasion that he seeks to abandon Śrī Rāma, who is sinless towards the people!" (8)

एता वाचो मनुष्याणां ग्रामसंवासवासिनाम् । शृण्वन्नतिययौ वीरः कोसलान् कोसलेश्वरः ॥ ९ ॥
ततो वेदश्रुतिं नाम शिववारिवहां नदीम् । उत्तीर्याभिमुखः प्रायादगस्त्याध्युषितां दिशम् ॥१०॥
गत्वा तु सुचिरं कालं ततः शीतवहां नदीम् । गोमतीं गोयुतानूपामतरत् सागरंगमाम् ॥११॥
गोमतीं चाप्यतिक्रम्य राघवः शीघ्रगैर्हयैः । मयूरहंसाभिरुतां ततार स्यन्दिकां नदीम् ॥१२॥
स महीं मनुना राज्ञा दत्तामिक्ष्वाकवे पुरा । स्फीतां राष्ट्रवृतां रामो वैदेहीमन्वदर्शयत् ॥१३॥
सूत इत्येव चाभाष्य सारथिं तमभीक्ष्णशः । हंसमत्तस्वरः श्रीमानुवाच पुरुषोत्तमः ॥१४॥
कदाहं पुनरागम्य सरय्वाः पुष्पिते वने । मृगयां पर्यटिष्यामि मात्रा पित्रा च संगतः ॥१५॥
नात्यर्थमभिकाङ्क्षामि मृगयां सरयूवने । रतिर्ह्येषातुला लोके राजर्षिगणसम्मता ॥१६॥
राजर्षीणां हि लोकेऽस्मिन् रत्यर्थं मृगया वने । काले कृतां तां मनुजैर्धन्विनामभिकाङ्क्षिताम् ॥१७॥
स तमध्वानमैक्ष्वाकः सूतं मधुरया गिरा । तं तमर्थमभिप्रेत्य ययौ वाक्यमुदीरयन् ॥१८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकोनपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ४९ ॥

Hearing these remarks of men residing in (the adjoining) villages and hamlets, the heroic prince of Kosala passed beyond the limits of Kosala. (9) Having crossed the river named Vedaśruti, which carries auspicious waters, he then pressed forward facing the south (the quarter occupied by Sage Agastya). (10) Journeying for his part (in that direction) for a pretty long time, he next crossed the river Gomti, which carried cool waters and heads towards the sea (through the medium of the holy Ganga) and whose banks are adorned with cows. (11) Having reached the other bank of the Gomti too, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) crossed with the help of swift-going horses the river Syandikā (as well), made resonant by peacocks and swans. (12) The said Śrī Rāma (now) showed to Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) the prosperous land (of Kosala, the southern boundary of which was defined by the Syandikā), which was given of yore by Manu, the king of kings, to (his eldest son) Ikṣwāku and which was bounded (on all sides) by (other adjoining) territories. (13) Repeatedly addressing the aforesaid charioteer in the words "O charioteer," the glorious Rāma (the foremost of men), whose voice resembled the cackling of a swan in rut, said, (14) "When, returning back (to Ayodhya) and united (once more) with my parents, shall I roam hunting in the woodland bordering on the Sarayu and laden with blossoms? (15) I do not hanker much after sport in the woodland bordering on the Sarayu. In fact it is a unique enjoyment made much of in the world by hosts of royal sages. (16) Truly speaking, hunting in a forest was resorted to in this world for the gratification of royal sages. Even though it was adopted at times by the sons of Manu and was sought after by (other) bowmen, I do not long for it excessively." (17) Conversing (thus) with the charioteer on various topics in sweet words, the said Śrī Rāma (a scion of Ikṣwāku) advanced along that route. (18)

Thus ends Canto Forty-nine in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto L

Standing with his face turned towards Ayodhya, Śrī Rāma bids farewell to his birth-place and, sending back the people hailing from the countryside, who had come to see him, and crossing the frontiers of Kosala, Śrī Rāma reaches the bank of the holy Ganga. Alighting from the chariot under an Ingudī tree standing on the bank, he goes forward to meet Guha, the chief of the Niṣādas, who had come to meet him. Nay, worshipping the evening twilight and taking water alone (for food and drink), the prince lies down on the ground to repose for the night; while Sumantra, Guha and Lakṣmaṇa spend the night talking together.

विशालान् कोसलान् रम्यान् यात्वा लक्ष्मणपूर्वजः । अयोध्यामुन्मुखो धीमान् प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
आपृच्छे त्वां पुरिश्रेष्ठे काकुत्स्थपरिपालिते । दैवतानि च यानि त्वां पालयन्त्यावसन्ति च ॥ २ ॥
निवृत्तवनवासस्त्वामनृणो जगतीपतेः । पुनर्द्रक्ष्यामि मात्रा च पित्रा च सह संगतः ॥ ३ ॥
ततो रुचिरताम्राक्षो भुजमुद्यम्य दक्षिणम् । अश्रुपूर्णमुखो दीनोऽब्रवीज्जानपदं जनम् ॥ ४ ॥
अनुक्रोशो दया चैव यथार्हं मयि वः कृतः । चिरं दुःखस्य पापीयो गम्यतामर्थसिद्धये ॥ ५ ॥
तेऽभिवाद्य महात्मानं कृत्वा चापि प्रदक्षिणम् । विलपन्तो नरा घोरं व्यतिष्ठंश्च क्वचित् क्वचित् ॥ ६ ॥
तथा विलपतां तेषामतृप्तानां च राघवः । अचक्षुर्विषयं प्रायाद् यथार्कः क्षणदामुखे ॥ ७ ॥

Having travelled across the extensive and beautiful territory of Kosala and standing with his face turned towards Ayodhya, the wise Śrī Rāma (elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa) with joined palms addressed the following words to Ayodhya:—(1) "I take leave of you, O pre-eminent city, carefully protected by King Daśaratha (a scion of Kakutstha), as well as of the deities that protect you and dwell in you. (2) When the period of my exile in the forest has expired and I have got square with the emperor (by executing his command and implementing the promise made by him to Kaikeyī), I shall see you again, united (once more) with my mother and father." (3) Lifting up his right arm and wearing a wretched look, his face covered with tears, Śrī Rāma (who was possessed of lovely reddish eyes) then spoke to the people hailing from the countryside (as follows) :—(4) "Respect and compassion according to my worth (in your eyes) have been shown to me by you (all). Prolongation of the agony (which is being experienced by you due to your presence by my side) is most undesirable. (Therefore pray) let you be gone for accomplishing your desired object (*viz*, attending to your household work) !" (5) Greeting the high-souled prince and going round him clockwise (as a mark of respect), those men stood rooted here and there (not minding where they stood), wailing frightfully. (6) (Even) while they were lamenting as aforesaid, unsated as they were (with the sight of Śrī Rāma), Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) passed beyond their sight (just) as the sun goes out of sight at the commencement of night. (7)

ततो धान्यधनोपेतान् दानशीलजनाञ्शिवान् । अकुतश्चिद्भयान् रम्यांश्चैत्ययूपसमावृतान् ॥ ८ ॥
उद्यानाम्रवणोपेतान् सम्पन्नसलिलाशयान् । तुष्टपुष्टजनाकीर्णान् गोकुलाकुलसेवितान् ॥ ९ ॥
रक्षणीयान् नरेन्द्राणां ब्रह्मघोषाभिनादितान् । रथेन पुरुषव्याघ्रः कोसलानत्यवर्तत ॥१०॥
मध्येन मुदितं स्फीतं रम्योद्यानसमाकुलम् । राज्यं भोज्यं नरेन्द्राणां ययौ धृतिमतां वरः ॥११॥

Śrī Rāma (a tiger among men) then crossed in his chariot the blessed and lovely territory of Kosala, which was full of foodgrains and (other) riches and was peopled by men given to charity, which had no fear from any quarter and was covered all over with temples and sacrificial posts, which was rich in gardens and mango groves and strewn with ponds full of water, which was thickly populated with contented and well-fed people and abounded in herds of cows, (nay each village of) which deserved to be protected by kings and which was made resonant with the chanting of the Vedas. (8-10) (Thence) Śrī Rāma (the foremost of those possessed of firmness) drove at a moderate speed to a happy and prosperous territory ruled over by a number of (feudatory) chiefs and abounding in lovely gardens. (11)

तत्र त्रिपथगां दिव्यां शीततोयामशैवलाम् । ददर्श राघवो गङ्गां रम्यामृषिनिषेविताम् ॥१२॥
आश्रमैरविदूरस्थैः श्रीमद्भिः समलंकृताम् । कालेऽप्सरोभिर्हृष्टाभिः सेविताम्भोह्रदां शिवाम्॥१३॥
देवदानवगन्धर्वैः किंनरैरुपशोभिताम् । नागगन्धर्वपत्नीभिः सेवितां सततं शिवाम् ॥१४॥
देवाक्रीडशताकीर्णां देवोद्यानयुतां नदीम् । देवार्थमाकाशगतां विख्यातां देवपद्मिनीम् ॥१५॥
जलाघाताट्टहासोग्रां फेननिर्मलहासिनीम् । क्वचिद् वेणीकृतजलां क्वचिदावर्तशोभिताम् ॥१६॥
क्वचित् स्तिमितगम्भीरां क्वचिद् वेगसमाकुलाम् । क्वचिद् गम्भीरनिर्घोषां क्वचिद् भैरवनिःस्वनाम् ॥१७॥
देवसंघाप्लुतजलां निर्मलोत्पलसंकुलाम् । क्वचिदाभोगपुलिनां क्वचिन्निर्मलवालुकाम् ॥१८॥

There (in the confines of that kingdom) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) saw the celestial and lovely river Ganga, which takes a threefold course (flowing as it does through heaven, earth and the subterranean regions), carries cool waters, is free from duckweed and is frequented by Ṛṣis. (12) The blessed river was adorned with splendid hermitages standing not very far (from one another); and its pools, overflowing with water, were resorted to at suitable hours by merry celestial nymphs. (13) (Nay) the blessed river was graced with (the presence of) gods and demons, Gandharvas (celestial musicians) and Kinnaras and was constantly* visited by the consorts of Nāgas and Gandharvas. (14) The well-known river was hemmed in by hundreds of pleasure-hills (forming part of the Himalayan range) and adorned with celestial gardens; it coursed through the heavens for the benefit of gods and contained celestial lotuses. (15) It assumed a severe aspect while indulging in a horse-laugh in the form of a noise produced by the striking of its waters against rocks, and seemed to shed a bright smile when covered with (white) foam. At some places its water was reduced to the shape of plaited locks (because of its flowing in a curved line), while at other places it was adorned with eddies. (16) Somewhere its waters were still and deep, and at other places they were disturbed with violent agitation. Here it made a deep roaring sound and there it produced a terrific noise. (17) Hosts of gods took a dip into its water, covered all over with white lotuses. Here it was hemmed in with spacious banks and there it was lined with white sands. (18)

हंससारससंघुष्टां चक्रवाकोपशोभिताम् । सदामत्तैश्च विहगैरभिपन्नामनिन्दिताम् ॥१९॥
क्वचित् तीररुहैर्वृक्षैर्मालाभिरिव शोभिताम् । क्वचित् फुल्लोत्पलच्छन्नां क्वचित् पद्मवनाकुलाम् ॥२०॥
क्वचित् कुमुदखण्डैश्च कुड्मलैरुपशोभिताम् । नानापुष्परजोध्वस्तां समदामिव च क्वचित् ॥२१॥
व्यपेतमलसंघातां मणिनिर्मलदर्शनाम् । दिशागजैर्वनगजैर्मत्तैश्च वरवारणैः ॥२२॥
देवराजोपवाह्यैश्च संनादितवनान्तराम् । प्रमदामिव यत्नेन भूषितां भूषणोत्तमैः ॥२३॥
फलपुष्पैः किसलयैर्वृतां गुल्मैर्द्विजैस्तथा । विष्णुपादच्युतां दिव्यामपापां पापनाशिनीम् ॥२४॥
शिंशुमारैश्च नक्रैश्च भुजङ्गैश्च समन्विताम् । शंकरस्य जटाजूटाद् भ्रष्टां सागरतेजसा ॥२५॥

The river, which is free from reproach (in every way) was rendered noisy by swans and cranes, was graced with Chakrawākas (a species of bird which gets disunited with its mate by night); and (other) birds which are in rut all the year round kept hovering on its waters. (19) Here it was decked with trees growing on its banks, which encircled it like garlands. Here it was covered with full-blown lotuses, while there it was carpeted with a bed of lotuses. (20) Here it was graced with beds of water-lilies in the form of buds, while there it was reddened with the pollen of numerous flowers and looked like a woman excited with passion. (21) Stocks of sins (of those bathing in it or drinking of its waters) are washed away by it and it presents an appearance spotless as the effulgence of a gem. The interior of the forests encircling its banks is rendered noisy by the elephants guarding the quarters, wild elephants and (other tame) elephants of excellent breed (belonging to the Airāvata species) used for riding by Indra (the ruler of gods). Surrounded by (trees laden with) fruits and flowers and tender leaves, shrubs and birds (of various species), it looked like a young woman artistically decked with the best of jewels. Not only devoid of sins, the celestial river dispels (all) sins, flowing as it does from the (holy) feet of Lord Viṣṇu. (22—24) (In deep waters) the river was infested with sharks and crocodiles as well as with snakes and had fallen from the mass of matted hair (on the head) of Lord Śankara, thanks to the power acquired through religious austerities by Emperor Bhagīratha. (25)

---

* We read in the Mahābhārata :—

भुक्त्वा वा यदि वाभुक्त्वा रात्रौ वा यदि वा दिवा ।
न कालनियमः कश्चिद् गङ्गां प्राप्य सरिद्वराम् ॥

"One can bathe in the Ganga after taking one's meals or without taking meals and as well by day as by night There is no restriction about time once you reach the Ganga, the foremost of (all) rivers."

समुद्रमहिषीं गङ्गां सारसक्रौञ्चनादिताम् । आससाद महाबाहुः शृङ्गवेरपुरं प्रति ॥२६॥
तामूर्मिकलिलावर्तामन्ववेक्ष्य महारथः । सुमन्त्रमब्रवीत् सूतमिहैवाद्य वसामहे ॥२७॥
अविदूरादयं नद्या बहुपुष्पप्रवालवान् । सुमहानिङ्गुदीवृक्षो वसामोऽत्रैव सारथे ॥२८॥
प्रेक्षामि सरितां श्रेष्ठां सम्मान्यसलिलां शिवाम् । देवमानवगन्धर्वमृगपन्नगपक्षिणाम् ॥२९॥
लक्ष्मणश्च सुमन्त्रश्च बाढमित्येव राघवम् । उक्त्वा तमिङ्गुदीवृक्षं तदोपययतुर्हयैः ॥३०॥
रामोऽभियाय तं रम्यं वृक्षमिक्ष्वाकुनन्दनः । रथादवतरत् तस्मात् सभार्यः सहलक्ष्मणः ॥३१॥
सुमन्त्रोऽप्यवतीर्याथ मोचयित्वा हयोत्तमान् । वृक्षमूलगतं राममुपतस्थे कृताञ्जलिः ॥३२॥

In the vicinity of Śṛngaverapura (the modern Singraur) Śrī Rāma (the mighty-armed prince) reached (the bank of) the Ganga, the principal consort of Ocean, which was rendered noisy by cranes and herons. (26) Perceiving the river, which was full of eddies interspersed with its waves, the great car-warrior said to the charioteer Sumantra, "Let us halt at this very spot today. (27) Not very far from the river stands this very large Ingudī tree containing abundant flowers and fresh leaves. Let us halt under this very tree, O charioteer ! (28) I shall clearly behold (from that place) the benign Ganga (the foremost of rivers), whose waters deserve to be respected by gods, human beings, Gandharvas, beasts, reptiles and birds (alike)." (29) Saying "Very well !" and nothing more to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), Lakṣmaṇa and Sumantra too then drove up to the Ingudī tree in the chariot drawn by horses. (30) Approaching that lovely tree, Śrī Rāma, the delight of the Ikṣwākus, alighted from that chariot along with his consort and with Lakṣmaṇa. (31) Getting down and unyoking the excellent horses, Sumantra too with joined palms stood by the side of Śrī Rāma, seated at the foot of the tree. (32)

तत्र राजा गुहो नाम रामस्यात्मसमः सखा । निषादजात्यो बलवान् स्थपतिश्चेति विश्रुतः ॥३३॥
स श्रुत्वा पुरुषव्याघ्रं रामं विषयमागतम् । वृद्धैः परिवृतोऽमात्यैर्ज्ञातिभिश्चाप्युपागतः ॥३४॥
ततो निषादाधिपतिं दृष्ट्वा दूरादुपस्थितम् । सह सौमित्रिणा रामः समागच्छद् गुहेन सः ॥३५॥
तमार्तः सम्परिष्वज्य गुहो राघवमब्रवीत् । यथायोध्या तथेदं ते राम किं करवाणि ते ॥३६॥
ईदृशं हि महाबाहो कः प्राप्स्यत्यतिथिं प्रियम् । ततो गुणवदन्नाद्यमुपादाय पृथग्विधम् ॥३७॥
अर्घ्यं चोपानयच्छीघ्रं वाक्यं चेदमुवाच ह ।

The king of that territory, Guha by name, was a friend of Śrī Rāma, dear to him as his own life. He was a Niṣāda by birth, possessed of bodily as well as military strength (owning as he did a large army consisting of all the four limbs, *viz*, elephants, chariots, horsemen and foot soldiers) and well-known as a ruler of the Niṣādas. (33) Hearing of Śrī Rāma, a tiger among men, having arrived in his territory, and accompanied by his elderly ministers and relations too, he sought the prince. (34) Seeing from a distance the ruler of the Niṣādas waiting, the said Śrī Rāma along with Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) thereupon went forth to meet Guha. (35) Closely embracing Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), Guha, who felt distressed (to see him clad in the robes of a hermit) said to him, "This principality (of Śṛngaverapura) is as much yours as Ayodhya, O Rāma ! What shall I do for you ? In fact who will get such a beloved guest (as you), O mighty-armed prince ?" Having brought cooked rice of excellent quality and other dishes of various kinds, he then quickly offered him water to wash his hands with and other articles of worship and spoke as follows: so the tradition goes:—

स्वागतं ते महाबाहो तवेयमखिला मही ॥३८॥
वयं प्रेष्या भवान् भर्ता साधु राज्यं प्रशाधि नः ।
भक्ष्यं भोज्यं च पेयं च लेह्यं चैतदुपस्थितम् । शयनानि च मुख्यानि वाजिनां खादनं च ते ॥३९॥
गुहमेवं ब्रुवाणं तु राघवः प्रत्युवाच ह । अर्चिताश्चैव हृष्टाश्च भवता सर्वदा वयम् ॥४०॥
पद्भ्यामभिगमाच्चैव स्नेहसंदर्शनेन च । भुजाभ्यां साधु वृत्ताभ्यां पीडयन् वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥४१॥
दिष्ट्या त्वां गुह पश्यामि ह्यरोगं सह बान्धवैः । अपि ते कुशलं राष्ट्रे मित्रेषु च वनेषु च ॥४२॥
यत् त्विदं भवता किंचित् प्रीत्या समुपकल्पितम् । सर्वं तदनुजानामि नहि वर्ते प्रतिग्रहे ॥४३॥
कुशचीराजिनधरं फलमूलाशनं च माम् । विद्धि प्रणिहितं धर्मे तापसं वनगोचरम् ॥४४॥
अश्वानां खादनेनाहमर्थी नान्येन केनचित् । एतावतात्र भवता भविष्यामि सुपूजितः ॥४५॥
एते हि दयिता राज्ञः पितुर्दशरथस्य मे । एतैः सुविहितैरश्वैर्भविष्याम्यहमर्चितः ॥४६॥

"Welcome is your advent (to this place), O mighty-armed prince ! This entire land (of mine) is yours. (36-38) We are your servants, you are our master; (pray) rule over our kingdom in the proper way (from now). Nay, here are at your service dishes requiring mastication (such as rice) and those which can be eaten without mastication (such as milk boiled with rice and sugar), those which can be drunk, those which are fit to be licked up and those which can be sucked. Moreover, there are excellent beds (for you to sleep on) as well as food for your horses." (39) To Guha, who was speaking as aforesaid, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), for his part, they say, replied (as follows):—"We stand honoured by you by your very coming (all the way) on foot to meet us as well as by your exhibition of affection, and are always pleased (with you)." Pressing Guha tightly (once more) with his rounded arms, Śrī Rāma added the following:— (40-41) "I am glad, O Guha, I see you quite in good health with your relations. Is all well with your state, allies and forests ? (42) I for my part accept and allow you to take back all this, that has been lovingly offered by you, since I do not make use of gifts (for my own purpose). (43) Know me as under a vow to wear (a zone of) Kuśa grass, the bark of trees and deerskin and to subsist on fruits and roots (alone), to practise austerities and dwell in the forest remaining devoted to piety. (44) I am interested only in having food for the horses and in nothing else. By being provided with this much at the present moment I shall be duly entertained by you. (45) Since these horses are beloved of my father, King Daśaratha, I shall feel honoured by these horses being duly fed." (46)

अश्वानां प्रतिपानं च खादनं चैव सोऽन्वशात् । गुहस्तत्रैव पुरुषांस्त्वरितं दीयतामिति ॥४७॥
ततश्चीरोत्तरासङ्गः संध्यामन्वास्य पश्चिमाम् । जलमेवाददे भोज्यं लक्ष्मणेनाहृतं स्वयम् ॥४८॥
तस्य भूमौ शयानस्य पादौ प्रक्षाल्य लक्ष्मणः । सभार्यस्य ततोऽभ्येत्य तस्थौ वृक्षमुपाश्रितः ॥४९॥
गुहोऽपि सह सूतेन सौमित्रिमनुभाषयन् । अन्वजाग्रत् ततो राममप्रमत्तो धनुर्धरः ॥५०॥
तथा शयानस्य ततो यशस्विनो मनस्विनो दाशरथेर्महात्मनः ।
अदृष्टदुःखस्य सुखोचितस्य सा तदा व्यतीता सुचिरेण शर्वरी ॥५१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५० ॥

On that very spot the said Guha commanded his men in the following words :—"Let milk etc. (which horses of excellent breed are given to drink after being fed with grass etc.) and barley flour mixed with ghee, sugar and so on (which they are given to eat in addition to grass etc.) be promptly supplied to the horses." (47) Having worshipped the evening twilight, appearing in the west, with an upper garment made of the bark of trees (on his person), Śrī Rāma then took for food only water brought by Lakṣmaṇa himself (thus observing a fast in honour of the sacred river which he visited). (48) Having cleanly washed the feet of Śrī Rāma and his consort lying on the ground (to repose for the night), and receding from that place, Lakṣmaṇa took his position at the foot of another tree close by. (49) Following in the footsteps of Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) and encouraging him to speak (on the virtues of Śrī Rāma), and wielding his bow, Guha too thereupon kept vigil with the charioteer, remaining alert (all the time) in the interest of Śrī Rāma. (50) While the illustrious, lofty-minded and high-souled Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha), who had never undergone suffering and who deserved (all) comforts, remained lying after that (on the ground) as aforesaid, that night eventually lingered away. (51)

Thus ends Canto Fifty in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LI

Expressing his readiness to guard the Crown prince and his consort, keeping awake the whole night, Guha importunes Lakṣmaṇa to repose. Reminding Guha of Śrī Rama's greatness, Lakṣmaṇa, however, tells him that even though the duty of guarding his princely brother and his consort could as well be entrusted to Guha, he felt that he did not deserve to lie down in the presence of his elder brother and sister-in-law and preferred to remain awake. Expressing grief for his royal father and loving mothers he therefore spends the night talking with Guha.

तं जाग्रतमदम्भेन भ्रातुरर्थाय लक्ष्मणम् । गुहः संतापसंतप्तो राघवं वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥

इयं तात सुखा शय्या त्वदर्थमुपकल्पिता । प्रत्याश्वसिहि साध्वस्यां राजपुत्र यथासुखम् ॥ २ ॥
उचितोऽयं जनः सर्वः क्लेशानां त्वं सुखोचितः । गुप्त्यर्थं जागरिष्यामः काकुत्स्थस्य वयं निशाम् ॥ ३ ॥
नहि रामात् प्रियतमो ममास्ते भुवि कश्चन । ब्रवीम्येव च ते सत्यं सत्येनैव च ते शपे ॥ ४ ॥
अस्य प्रसादादाशंसे लोकेऽस्मिन् सुमहद् यशः । धर्मावाप्तिं च विपुलामर्थकामौ च पुष्कलौ ॥ ५ ॥
सोऽहं प्रियसखं रामं शयानं सह सीतया । रक्षिष्यामि धनुष्पाणिः सर्वथा ज्ञातिभिः सह ॥ ६ ॥
न मेऽस्त्यविदितं किंचिद् वनेऽस्मिंश्चरतः सदा । चतुरङ्गं ह्यतिबलं सुमहत् संतरेमहि ॥ ७ ॥

Distressed with agony (to see the princely couple lying on the ground) Guha spoke as follows to the celebrated Lakṣmaṇa (a scion of Raghu), who was keeping awake, through sincere love, for the protection of his (elder) brother (Śrī Rāma):—(1) "Here is a cosy bed nicely prepared for you, dear brother; pray repose comfortably on it, O prince! (2) We are all inured to hardships, while you are deserving of comforts. We shall keep vigil for the night for the protection of Śrī Rāma (a. scion of Kakutstha). (3) For, none on earth is more beloved of me than Śrī Rāma: I tell you the bare truth and swear to you by truth. (4) By his grace (alone) I hope to earn very great renown in this world as also to acquire religious merit as well as abundant riches and sense-enjoyment. (5) As such I shall with my kindred guard in every way, bow in hand, my beloved friend, Śrī Rāma, reposing with Sītā. (6) Nothing in this woodland is unknown to me, wandering (as I do) all the time in it. We can (also) undoubtedly get the better of a surpassingly huge and exceptionally mighty army consisting of the four limbs (*viz*, elephants, chariots, horsemen and foot soldiers)." (7)

लक्ष्मणस्तु तदोवाच रक्ष्यमाणास्त्वयानघ । नात्र भीता वयं सर्वे धर्ममेवानुपश्यता ॥ ८ ॥
कथं दाशरथौ भूमौ शयाने सह सीतया । शक्या निद्रा मया लब्धुं जीवितं वा सुखानि वा ॥ ९ ॥
यो न देवासुरैः सर्वैः शक्यः प्रसहितुं युधि । तं पश्य सुखसंसुप्तं तृणेषु सह सीतया ॥१०॥
यो मन्त्रतपसा लब्धो विविधैश्च पराक्रमैः । एको दशरथस्यैष पुत्रः सदृशलक्षणः ॥११॥
अस्मिन् प्रव्रजिते राजा न चिरं वर्तयिष्यति । विधवा मेदिनी नूनं क्षिप्रमेव भविष्यति ॥१२॥
विनद्य सुमहानादं श्रमेणोपरताः स्त्रियः । निर्घोषोपरतं तात मन्ये राजनिवेशनम् ॥१३॥
कौसल्या चैव राजा च तथैव जननी मम । नाशंसे यदि जीवन्ति सर्वे ते शर्वरीमिमाम् ॥१४॥
जीवेदपि हि मे माता शत्रुघ्नस्यान्ववेक्षया । तद् दुःखं यदि कौसल्या वीरसूर्विनशिष्यति ॥१५॥
अनुरक्तजनाकीर्णा सुखा लोकप्रियावहा । राजव्यसनसंसृष्टा सा पुरी विनशिष्यति ॥१६॥

Thereupon Lakṣmaṇa for his part replied (as follows):—"Being protected by you, who keep your duty alone in view, O sinless Guha, we all are not (the least) afraid (of any) in this land. (8) But so long as Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha) remains lying down on the ground with Sītā, how can sleep be had by me, much less nourishment intended to keep the body and soul together or amenities of life? (9) Behold him, who cannot be withstood in battle by all the gods and demons (put together), fast asleep with comfort on a bed of straw with Sītā! (10) When Śrī Rāma,—who was secured as a foremost (eldest both in age and virtues) son, endowed with characteristics similar to his own, by Daśaratha by virtue of his chanting, of sacred texts and austerities as well as through various undertakings (in the form of sacrificial performances etc.)—has gone into exile, the king (Daśaratha) will not live long and the earth will surely be widowed forthwith (by the demise of Daśaratha). (12) Having uttered forth a shrill cry, the women (in the city) must have ceased weeping through exhaustion (by this time). I believe the royal palace (too) has (by now) become silent after a loud wail. (13) I do not expect that Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother) and the king and even so my mother (Sumitrā)—all these will outlive this night. (14) My mother might even survive due to her expecting to meet Śatrughna. But it will be painful if Kausalyā, who has given birth to a heroic son, dies. (15) That city (of Ayodhya), which has (till now) been crowded with men and women full of love (for Śrī Rāma), (nay) which has been a source of joy (to all) and brought pleasure to the world, will perish when seized with agony over the king's death. (16)

कथं पुत्रं महात्मानं ज्येष्ठपुत्रमपश्यतः । शरीरं धारयिष्यन्ति प्राणा राज्ञो महात्मनः ॥१७॥
विनष्टे नृपतौ पश्चात् कौसल्या विनशिष्यति । अनन्तरं च मातापि मम नाशमुपैष्यति ॥१८॥
अतिक्रान्तमतिक्रान्तमनवाप्य मनोरथम् । राज्ये राममनिक्षिप्य पिता मे विनशिष्यति ॥१९॥
सिद्धार्थाः पितरं वृत्तं तस्मिन् काले ह्युपस्थिते । प्रेतकार्येषु सर्वेषु संस्करिष्यन्ति राघवम् ॥२०॥
रम्यचत्वरसंस्थानां संविभक्तमहापथाम् । हर्म्यप्रासादसम्पन्नां गणिकावरशोभिताम् ॥२१॥
रथाश्वगजसम्बाधां तूर्यनादनिनादिताम् । सर्वकल्याणसम्पूर्णां हृष्टपुष्टजनाकुलाम् ॥२२॥
आरामोद्यानसम्पन्नां समाजोत्सवशालिनीम् । सुखिता विचरिष्यन्ति राजधानीं पितुर्मम ॥२३॥
अपि जीवेद् दशरथो वनवासात् पुनर्वयम् । प्रत्यागम्य महात्मानमपि पश्याम सुव्रतम् ॥२४॥
अपि सत्यप्रतिज्ञेन सार्धं कुशलिनो वयम् । निवृत्ते वनवासेऽस्मिन्नयोध्यां प्रविशेमहि ॥२५॥

"How will the life-breath of the high-souled king retain its hold on his body when he is no longer able to behold the high-souled Śrī Rāma, his eldest son? (17) When the king is dead, Kausalyā will die in his wake and my mother (Sumitrā) too will meet her end immediately after. (18) Not attaining his desired end and without installing Śrī Rāma on the throne (of Ayodhya) my father will breathe his last with the words 'Lost! Lost!!' (on his lips). (19) Fortunate men (alone) will consecrate our deceased father, Drśaratha (a scion of Raghu) in the course of all funeral rites when that (unlucky) moment has actually arrived. (20) (If, on the other hand, Daśaratha survives,) people will move about happily in the capital of my father, provided with cross roads, allocated at lovely sites, and well-aligned roads, (nay) rich in mansions of well-to-do men, temples of gods and royal palaces, adorned with the foremost of courtesans, crowded with chariots, horses and elephants, made resonant with the sound of musical instruments, full of all blessings and crowded with merry and well-fed men, well-provided with gardens and royal parks and bright with festivities carried on under the auspices of associations. (21-23) In case Daśaratha (our father) survives, we might on returning from our exile in the forest see that high-souled king of noble vows once more. (24) Let us hope when this period of exile in the forest has expired we may safely return to Ayodhya along with Śrī Rāma (who is true to his promise)." (25)

परिदेवयमानस्य दुःखार्तस्य महात्मनः । तिष्ठतो राजपुत्रस्य शर्वरी सात्यवर्तत ॥२६॥

तथा हि सत्यं ब्रुवति प्रजाहिते नरेन्द्रसूनौ गुरुसौहृदाद् गुहः ।
मुमोच बाष्पं व्यसनाभिपीडितो ज्वरातुरो नाग इव व्यथातुरः ॥२७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५१ ॥

While the high-souled prince (Lakṣmaṇa) sat lamenting (as above), afflicted with agony as he was, that night slipped away. (26) while Lakṣmaṇa (son of Daśaratha), a friend of the people, was speaking the truth as above out of affection for his elder brother (Śrī Rāma), Guha, who was sore pinched with adversity and oppressed with agony, shed tears like an elephant tormented with fever. (27)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-one in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्विपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LII

While about to step into the boat brought by Guha's men and asked by Guha if he could be of any further use to the prince, Śrī Rāma enjoins him to obey the emperor. Importuned by Sumantra to take him as a personal attendant to the forest, the prince declines his loving offer and, expostulating with him, sends him back to Ayodhya. Entangling their locks into a thick mass with the milk of a banyan tree procured by Guha, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with Sītā get into the boat. On reaching the middle of the stream Sītā offers prayers to Mother Ganga (the deity presiding over the stream) and after crossing the river all the three halt for the night at the foot of a tree.

प्रभातायां तु शर्वर्यां पृथुवक्षा महायशाः । उवाच रामः सौमित्रिं लक्ष्मणं शुभलक्षणम् ॥ १ ॥
भास्करोदयकालेऽसौ गता भगवती निशा । असौ सुकृष्णो विहगः कोकिलस्तात कूजति ॥ २ ॥
बर्हिणानां च निर्घोषः श्रूयते नदतां वने । तराम जाह्नवीं सौम्य शीघ्रगां सागरंगमाम् ॥ ३ ॥
विज्ञाय रामस्य वचः सौमित्रिर्मित्रनन्दनः । गुहमामन्त्र्य सूतं च सोऽतिष्ठद् भ्रातुरग्रतः ॥ ४ ॥
स तु रामस्य वचनं निशम्य प्रतिगृह्य च । स्थपतिस्तूर्णमाहूय सचिवानिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ५ ॥
अस्य वाहनसंयुक्तां कर्णग्राहवतीं शुभाम् । सुप्रतारां दृढां तीर्थे शीघ्रं नावमुपाहर ॥ ६ ॥
तं निशम्य गुहादेशं गुहामात्यो गतो महान् । उपोह्य रुचिरां नावं गुहाय प्रत्यवेदयत् ॥ ७ ॥
ततः स प्राञ्जलिर्भूत्वा गुहो राघवमब्रवीत् । उपस्थितेयं नौर्देव भूयः किं करवाणि ते ॥ ८ ॥
तवामरसुतप्रख्य तर्तुं सागरगामिनीम् । नौरियं पुरुषव्याघ्र शीघ्रमारोह सुव्रत ॥ ९ ॥
अथोवाच महातेजा रामो गुहमिदं वचः । कृतकामोऽस्मि भवता शीघ्रमारोप्यतामिति ॥१०॥

The night having ended in dawn, the highly illustrious Śrī Rāma, who was distinguished by a broad chest, spoke (as follows) to Sumitrā's son, Lakṣmaṇa,

Vaidika Pandit Srī V Hariharan Collection, Sholinganallur, Chennai

who was endowed with auspicious bodily marks :—(1) "The hour of sunrise is at hand and the glorious night has departed. Over there the very dark bird, the cuckoo, is uttering its notes, O dear brother! (2) The shrill note of peacocks crying in the woodland is also heard. Let us (therefore), O good brother, cross the swift-flowing Ganga (the daughter of Jahnu*), which runs towards the sea." (3) Grasping the intention of Śrī Rāma's words and informing Guha as well as the charioteer accordingly, the said Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), the delight of his friends, stood facing his (elder) brother (Śrī Rāma). (4) Hearing the command of Śrī Rāma and bowing to it, (nay) speedily summoning his ministers, Guha (the ruler of the Niṣādas) for his part spoke (to one of them) as follows :—(5) "Quickly bring to the landing-place a beautiful and stout boat, duly equipped with oars and a helmsman, by which Śrī Rāma (and his party) could easily ferry across." (6) Hearing the aforesaid command of Guha, the great minister of Guha departed and, bringing a charming boat to the nearest landing-place, reported the matter to Guha. (7) Joining his palms, the said Guha then said to Śrī Rāma, "Here is the boat ready, my lord! What more shall I do for you? (8) Here is a boat brought for you, O tiger among men, to cross the Ganga (flowing towards the sea), O prince effulgent as the son of a divinity! (Pray) get into it promptly, O observer of noble vows!" (9) The exceptionally glorious Śrī Rāma thereupon spoke to Guha as follows :—"My desire has been accomplished by you. Please have everything placed in the boat quickly." (10)

ततः कलापान् संनह्य खड्गौ बद्ध्वा च धन्विनौ । जग्मतुर्येन तां गङ्गां सीतया सह राघवौ ॥११॥
रामसेवं तु धर्मज्ञमुपागत्य विनीतवत् । किमहं करवाणीति सूतः प्राञ्जलिरब्रवीत् ॥१२॥
ततोऽब्रवीद् दाशरथिः सुमन्त्रं स्पृशन् करेणोत्तमदक्षिणेन ।
सुमन्त्र शीघ्रं पुनरेव याहि राज्ञः सकाशे भव चाप्रमत्तः ॥१३॥
निवर्तस्वेत्युवाचैनमेतावद्धि कृतं मम । रथं विहाय पद्भ्यां तु गमिष्यामो महावनम् ॥१४॥
आत्मानं त्वभ्यनुज्ञातमवेक्ष्यार्तः स सारथिः । सुमन्त्रः पुरुषव्याघ्रमैक्ष्वाकमिदमब्रवीत् ॥१५॥
नातिक्रान्तमिदं लोके पुरुषेणेह केनचित् । तव सभ्रातृभार्यस्य वासः प्राकृतवद् वने ॥१६॥
न मन्ये ब्रह्मचर्ये वा स्वधीते वा फलोदयः । मार्दवार्जवयोर्वापि त्वां चेद् व्यसनमागतम् ॥१७॥
सह राघव वैदेह्या भ्रात्रा चैव वने वसन् । त्वं गतिं प्राप्स्यसे वीर त्रींल्लोकांस्तु जयन्निव ॥१८॥
वयं खलु हता राम ये त्वया ह्युपवञ्चिताः । कैकेय्या वशमेष्यामः पापाया दुःखभागिनः ॥१९॥
इति ब्रुवन्नात्मसमं सुमन्त्रः सारथिस्तदा । दृष्ट्वा दूरगतं रामं दुःखार्तो रुरुदे चिरम् ॥२०॥

Having equipped themselves with an armour each and fastened their quivers and swords (to their person), the two archers, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (scions of Raghu), with Sītā then sought the said Ganga through the same landing-place as was resorted to by others. (11) Humbly approaching Śrī Rāma, who knew what is right and stood ready to leave, the charioteer humbly spoke with joined palms as follows :—"What shall I do ?" (12) Touching Sumantra with his auspicious right hand, Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha) thereupon replied to him, "Return speedily to the king's presence, O Sumantra, and do not lose your presence of mind." (13) "(Please) return," said he to Sumantra (and added), "this much is enough service to me. Leaving the chariot, we shall henceforth proceed to the great forest (of Daṇḍaka) on foot." (14) Distressed to find himself dismissed, the said charioteer, Sumantra, for his part submitted as follows to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Ikṣwāku), a tiger among men :—(15) "That destiny, by which has been brought about your exile in the forest with your consort and (younger) brother like that of a common man, has never been set aside by any man in this world. (16) I believe there is no gain in leading the (austere) life of a religious student (in the house of one's teacher), in studying the Vedas (as an integral part of such a life) or even in cultivating tenderness and guilelessness, when adversity has come (even) to you (in the shape of exile). (17) Living (as an exile) in the forest with Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) and (younger half) brother, O scion of Raghu, you will surely attain the same (exalted) position as one who has conquered (all) the worlds. (18) We are actually ruined, O Rāma, in that, forsaken by you, we shall surely fall under the sway of the sinful Kaikeyī and reap suffering." (19) Speaking thus in a strain worthy of himself, Sumantra, the charioteer, then wept long, stricken with sorrow as he was to see (with his mental eyes) Śrī Rāma gone to some distance. (20)

---

* The river Ganga, when brought down from heaven by the austerities of Emperor Bhagīratha, followed the latter to the subterranean regions in order to consecrate the remains of his great grand-uncles. In its course it inundated the sacrificial ground of King Jahnu, who in his anger drank up its waters. But the gods and sages and particularly Bhagīratha appeased his anger and he consented to release the waters through his ears. The river is thenceforth regarded as his daughter.

ततस्तु विगते बाष्पे सूतं स्पृष्टोदकं शुचिम् । रामस्तु मधुरं वाक्यं पुनः पुनरुवाच तम् ॥२१॥
इक्ष्वाकूणां त्वया तुल्यं सुहृदं नोपलक्षये । यथा दशरथो राजा मां न शोचेत् तथा कुरु ॥२२॥
शोकोपहतचेताश्च वृद्धश्च जगतीपतिः । कामभारावसन्नश्च तस्मादेतद् ब्रवीमि ते ॥२३॥
यद् यथाऽऽज्ञापयेत् किंचित् स महात्मा महीपतिः । कैकेय्याः प्रियकामार्थं कार्यं तदविकाङ्क्षया ॥२४॥
एतदर्थं हि राज्यानि प्रशासति नराधिपाः । यदेषां सर्वकृत्येषु मनो न प्रतिहन्यते ॥२५॥
यद् यथा स महाराजो नालीकमधिगच्छति । न च ताम्यति शोकेन सुमन्त्र कुरु तत् तथा ॥२६॥
अदृष्टदुःखं राजानं वृद्धमार्यं जितेन्द्रियम् । ब्रूयास्त्वमभिवाद्यैव मम हेतोरिदं वचः ॥२७॥
न चाहमनुशोचामि लक्ष्मणो न च शोचति । अयोध्यायाश्च्युताश्चेति वने वत्स्यामहेति वा ॥२८॥
चतुर्दशसु वर्षेषु निवृत्तेषु पुनः पुनः । लक्ष्मणं मां च सीतां च द्रक्ष्यसे शीघ्रमागतान् ॥२९॥

When his tears got dried up and the charioteer had sipped some water and got purified (the tears having brought defilement in him), Śrī Rāma for his part repeatedly spoke to him in a sweet tone as follows :—(21) "I do not perceive anyone who is as great a friend of the Ikṣwākus as you are. (Pray) act in such wise that King Daśaratha may not grieve for me. (22) The emperor is not only confused in mind through grief, he is aged too and has his host of desires (to see me installed as Prince Regent and so on) thwarted. Hence I tell you this. (23) Whatever and howsoever that high-souled emperor may enjoin you to do with intent to oblige mother Kaikeyī should be unhesitatingly done (by you). (24) Kings rule their states only with this end in view that their will may not be crossed in any undertaking. (25) Handle everything in such a way, O Sumantra, that the said emperor neither gets displeased nor does he feel distressed through grief. (26) Only after greeting the old and venerable king, who has never known suffering and has subdued his senses, make you this submission (to him) on my behalf:—

(27) 'Neither do I grieve nor does Lakṣmaṇa nor Sītā feels sorry that we have been uprooted from Ayodhya or that we are going to dwell in the forest. (28) When fourteen years have elapsed, you will once more see Lakṣmaṇa, myself and Sītā too returned apace (from the forest).' (29)

एवमुक्त्वा तु राजानं मातरं च सुमन्त्र मे । अन्याश्च देवीः सहिताः कैकेयीं च पुनः पुनः ॥३०॥
आरोग्यं ब्रूहि कौसल्यामथ पादाभिवन्दनम् । सीताया मम चार्यस्य वचनाल्लक्ष्मणस्य च ॥३१॥
ब्रूयाश्चापि महाराजं भरतं क्षिप्रमानय । आगतश्चापि भरतः स्थाप्यो नृपमते पदे ॥३२॥
भरतं च परिष्वज्य यौवराज्येऽभिषिच्य च । अस्मत्संतापजं दुःखं न त्वामभिभविष्यति ॥३३॥
भरतश्चापि वक्तव्यो यथा राजनि वर्तसे । तथा मातृषु वर्तेथाः सर्वास्वेवाविशेषतः ॥३४॥
यथा च तव कैकेयी सुमित्रा चाविशेषतः । तथैव देवी कौसल्या मम माता विशेषतः ॥३५॥
तातस्य प्रियकामेन यौवराज्यमवेक्षता । लोकयोरुभयोः शक्यं नित्यदा सुखमेधितुम् ॥३६॥
निवर्त्यमानो रामेण सुमन्त्रः प्रतिबोधितः । तत्सर्वं वचनं श्रुत्वा स्नेहात् काकुत्स्थमब्रवीत् ॥३७॥

"Having repeated as aforesaid to the king and my mother (Kausalyā), O Sumantra, as well as to the other queens along with Sumitrā, as also to Kaikeyī, tell Kausalyā that I am keeping good health. Then convey salutations at her feet on behalf of Sītā as well as myself, the elder brother, and of Lakṣmaṇa. (30-31) Also submit to the emperor (my father), '(Pray) get Bharata soon. And when returned (from his maternal uncle's), Bharata should be installed in the office intended for him by Your Majesty. (32) When you have (met and) embraced Bharata and installed him in the office of Prince Regent, the agony caused by the remorse felt by you on our account will no longer (be able to) overpower you.' (33) Bharata too should be exhorted in the following words:—'You should behave towards all your mothers without distinction in the same way as you do towards the king (your father). (34) (Even) as Kaikeyī and Sumitrā too are equally worthy of respect to you, more so is my mother, Queen Kausalyā (who is senior to all). (35) If you accept the office of Prince Regent with intent to please our father, it will be possible for you to thrive happily in both the worlds (this world and the next)." (36) Hearing the whole of the aforesaid discourse when instructed (as above) by Śrī Rāma with a view to his being sent back (to Ayodhya), Sumantra lovingly replied to him (as follows):—(37)

यदहं नोपचारेण ब्रूयां स्नेहादविक्लवम् । भक्तिमानिति तत् तावद् वाक्यं त्वं क्षन्तुमर्हसि ॥३८॥
कथं हि त्वद्विहीनोऽहं प्रतियास्यामि तां पुरीम् । तव तात वियोगेन पुत्रशोकातुरामिव ॥३९॥
सराममपि तावन्मे रथं दृष्ट्वा तदा जनः । विना रामं रथं दृष्ट्वा विदीर्येतापि सा पुरी ॥४०॥
दैन्यं हि नगरी गच्छेद् दृष्ट्वा शून्यमिमं रथम् । सूतावशेषं स्वं सैन्यं हतवीरमिवाहवे ॥४१॥
दूरेऽपि निवसन्तं त्वां मानसेनाग्रतः स्थितम् । चिन्तयन्तोऽद्य नूनं त्वां निराहाराः कृताः प्रजाः ॥४२॥
दृष्टं तद् वै त्वया राम यादृशं त्वत्प्रवासने । प्रजानां संकुलं वृत्तं त्वच्छोकक्लान्तचेतसाम् ॥४३॥
आर्तनादो हि यः पौरैरुन्मुक्तस्त्वत्प्रवासने । सरथं मां निशाम्यैव कुर्युः शतगुणं ततः ॥४४॥

"If I speak to you in an unfaltering tone due to affection and do not speak with reverence (which is due to you as my master), you ought in fact to forgive my mode of speech, considering me as full of devotion (to you). (38) Bereft of you, how shall I actually return to that city (of Ayodhya), which through separation from you has been reduced to the state of a mother stricken with grief due to separation from her son, O dear child ? (39) The people (of Ayodhya) were really torn with grief even to see this chariot with Śrī Rāma (yourself) at the time of your departure from Ayodhya. On seeing it without Śrī Rāma (this time) that city itself may be riven in two. (40) The city will be reduced to a sad plight on seeing this chariot without you (even) as the army of a hero on seeing his chariot with the charioteer (alone) surviving, the warrior having been killed in battle. (41) Thinking of you, who though dwelling afar, are (ever) mentally present before them, the people (of Ayodhya) must have been deprived of their food (and drink) today. (42) The great confusion that ensued, on (the occasion of) your exile, among the people (of Ayodhya), whose mind was depressed through grief on your account, was witnessed by you with your own eyes, O Rāma ! (43) (Nay) perceiving me alone with the chariot, the people of Ayodhya will raise a cry of distress a hundred times louder than that which was actually raised by them at the time of your banishment. (44)

अहं किं चापि वक्ष्यामि देवीं तव सुतो मया । नीतोऽसौ मातुलकुलं संतापं मा कृथा इति ॥४५॥
असत्यमपि नैवाहं ब्रूयां वचनमीदृशम् । कथमप्रियमेवाहं ब्रूयां सत्यमिदं वचः ॥४६॥
मम तावन्नियोगस्थास्त्वद्बन्धुजनवाहिनः । कथं रथं त्वया हीनं प्रवाह्यन्ति हयोत्तमाः ॥४७॥
तन्न शक्ष्याम्यहं गन्तुमयोध्यां त्वदृतेऽनघ । वनवासानुयानाय मामनुज्ञातुमर्हसि ॥४८॥
यदि मे याचमानस्य त्यागमेव करिष्यसि । सरथोऽग्निं प्रवेक्ष्यामि त्यक्तमात्र इह त्वया ॥४९॥
भविष्यन्ति वने यानि तपोविघ्नकराणि ते । रथेन प्रतिबाधिष्ये तानि सर्वाणि राघव ॥५०॥
त्वत्कृतेन मया प्राप्तं रथचर्याकृतं सुखम् । आशंसे त्वत्कृतेनाहं वनवासकृतं सुखम् ॥५१॥
प्रसीदेच्छामि तेऽरण्ये भवितुं प्रत्यनन्तरः । प्रीत्याभिहितमिच्छामि भव मे प्रत्यनन्तरः ॥५२॥
इमेऽपि च हया वीर यदि ते वनवासिनः । परिचर्यां करिष्यन्ति प्राप्स्यन्ति परमां गतिम् ॥५३॥
तव शुश्रूषणं मूर्ध्ना करिष्यामि वने वसन् । अयोध्यां देवलोकं वा सर्वथा प्रजहाम्यहम् ॥५४॥
नहि शक्या प्रवेष्टुं सा मयायोध्या त्वया विना । राजधानी महेन्द्रस्य यथा दुष्कृतकर्मणा ॥५५॥
वनवासे क्षयं प्राप्ते ममैष हि मनोरथः । यदनेन रथेनैव त्वां वहेयं पुरीं पुनः ॥५६॥
चतुर्दश हि वर्षाणि सहितस्य त्वया वने । क्षणभूतानि यास्यन्ति शतसंख्यानि चान्यथा ॥५७॥
भृत्यवत्सळ तिष्ठन्तं भर्तृपुत्रगते पथि । भक्तं भृत्यं स्थितं स्थित्या न मा त्वं हातुमर्हसि ॥५८॥

"Again, shall I (falsely) submit to the queen (Kausalyā) as follows:—'Your son, Rāma, has been conveyed to his maternal uncle's; (pray) do not give way to agony.' (45) I dare not make such a false report, even though it is pleasing to the ear, (and save her from agony for some time). (On the other hand) how can I make a correct yet unpalatable report (that Rāma has proceeded to the forest) ? (46) (Even if you insist on my returning to Ayodhya at all events) how will the excellent horses (drawing the chariot), which are subject to my control and transport only your kindred and yourself, draw the chariot without you ? (47) Therefore, O sinless prince, I shall not be able to return to Ayodhya (even if I try to do so) without you. You ought (under such circumstances) to allow me to follow you to share your exile in the forest. (48) If you (still) insist on leaving me, even though I solicit you to take me with you, I shall enter a fire, chariot and all, on this spot the moment I am forsaken by you, (49) With the help of the chariot, O scion of Raghu, I shall repel all those creatures that cause interruption in your austerities in the forest. (50) By your kind offices the pleasure of driving your chariot was secured by me. By your grace (alone) I hope (this time) to enjoy the pleasure of dwelling (with you) in the forest. (51) Be gracious (to me by allowing me to follow you to the forest). I long to be your close associate in the forest. I wish to hear your loving assent in the words 'Be my close associate !' (52) These horses too, O heroic prince, if they (get an opportunity to) serve you while you dwell in the forest, will attain the highest destiny (by serving their beloved master). (53) Dwelling in the forest (with you) I shall render service to you with my head bent low, and (in order to be allowed this privilege) I quit for good in every way Ayodhya and (even) heaven (the realm of gods). (54) Bereft of you Ayodhya is incapable of being entered by me much in the same way as Amarāvatī (the capital of the mighty Indra) is inaccessible to a man of sinful deeds. (55) Indeed this is my ambition that when your exile in the forest has come to an end I may convey you back to Ayodhya in this very chariot. (56) So long as I remain with you in the forest, fourteen years will undoubtedly slip away past me as though reduced to as many moments; whereas otherwise (if I stay away from you) they will multiply a hundredfold. (57) O prince, who are so fond of your dependants, you ought not to desert me, your devoted servant, standing resolved to tread on the path chosen by the son of his master and (ever) keeping within bounds." (58)

एवं बहुविधं दीनं याचमानं पुनः पुनः । रामो भृत्यानुकम्पी तु सुमन्त्रमिदमब्रवीत् ॥५९॥
जानामि परमां भक्तिमहं ते भर्तृवत्सल । शृणु चापि यदर्थं त्वां प्रेषयामि पुरीमितः ॥६०॥
नगरीं त्वां गतं दृष्ट्वा जननी मे यवीयसी । कैकेयी प्रत्ययं गच्छेदिति रामो वनं गतः ॥६१॥
विपरीते तुष्टिहीना वनवासं गते मयि । राजानं नातिशङ्केत मिथ्यावादीति धार्मिकम् ॥६२॥
एष मे प्रथमः कल्पो यदम्बा मे यवीयसी । भरतारक्षितं स्फीतं पुत्रराज्यमवाप्स्यते ॥६३॥
मम प्रियार्थं राज्ञश्च सुमन्त्र त्वं पुरीं व्रज । संदिष्टश्चापि यानर्थांस्तांस्तान् ब्रूयास्तथा तथा ॥६४॥

Śrī Rāma, for his part, compassionate as he was towards his dependants, replied as follows to Sumantra, who was piteously supplicating again and again in many ways as aforesaid :—(59) "I know your supreme devotion to me, O charioteer so fond of your master ! Nevertheless (pray) hear wherefore I send you (back) to Ayodhya from here. (60) Seeing you returned to the capital, my youngest mother, Kaikeyī, should feel convinced that I (Rāma) have left for the forest. (61) Otherwise (in the event of your remaining with me) let not Kaikeyī,—who is not going to derive satisfaction otherwise (even) on my having gone into exile in the forest,—suspect the pious king to be a liar. (62) This is my foremost intention (in sending you back to Ayodhya) that my youngest mother (Kaikeyī) should secure the kingdom (of Ayodhya), protected by Bharata and (thus) ruled by her own son, in good condition (and this will be possible only on your returning to Ayodhya; for till then the possibility of my returning to Ayodhya will not be completely ruled out and till then Bharata too will not be called back to Ayodhya and everyone will remain in a state of suspense). (63) For my pleasure and for the pleasure of the emperor (therefore), O Sumantra, return you to the capital and deliver all the messages that you have been asked to deliver each in the way you have been asked to do." (64)

इत्युक्त्वा वचनं सूतं सान्त्वयित्वा पुनः पुनः । गुहं वचनमक्लीबो रामो हेतुमदब्रवीत् ॥६५॥
नेदानीं गुह योग्योऽयं वासो मे सजने वने । अवश्यमाश्रमे वासः कर्तव्यस्तद्गतो विधिः ॥६६॥
सोऽहं गृहीत्वा नियमं तपस्विजनभूषणम् । हितकामः पितुर्भूयः सीताया लक्ष्मणस्य च ॥६७॥
जटाः कृत्वा गमिष्यामि न्यग्रोधक्षीरमानय । तत्क्षीरं राजपुत्राय गुहः क्षिप्रमुपाहरत् ॥६८॥
लक्ष्मणस्यात्मनश्चैव रामस्तेनाकरोज्जटाः । दीर्घबाहुर्नरव्याघ्रो जटिलत्वमधारयत् ॥६९॥
तौ तदा चीरसम्पन्नौ जटामण्डलधारिणौ । अशोभेतामृषिसमौ भ्रातरौ रामलक्ष्मणौ ॥७०॥

Having offered explanation to the charioteer as aforesaid and consoling him again and again, Śrī Rāma, who was not feeling the least timorous, gave (the following) reasoned instructions to Guha :—(65) "It is not proper for me on this occasion to dwell, as I am doing, in a forest in which my (own) men are present. Therefore an abode must be taken up by me in a hermitage (in an uninhabited region) and the procedure to be followed in this behalf must be observed (by me). (66) Adopting with the concurrence of Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa a discipline (in the shape of eating wild fruits, roots and bulbs etc. and reposing on the ground and so on) which serves as an embellishment for ascetics, seeking as I do the (spiritual) welfare of my father, and wearing matted hair, I should (like to) proceed further. (Therefore) please bring the milk-like exudation of a banyan tree." Guha fetched such exudation at once for the prince. (67-68) With that exudation Śrī Rāma, a tiger among men, who was possessed of long arms, formed his own locks as well as those of Lakṣmaṇa (who had also taken a vow of ascetic life) into a mass of clotted hair and (thus) wore the distinguishing mark of an ascetic (in the shape of matted hair). (69) Clad in the bark of trees and wearing a rounded mass of matted locks (on their head) those two brothers, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, looked charming at that time like two Ṛṣis (ascetic sages). (70)

ततो वैखानसं मार्गमास्थितः सहलक्ष्मणः । व्रतमादिष्टवान् रामः सहायं गुहमब्रवीत् ॥७१॥
अप्रमत्तो बले कोशे दुर्गे जनपदे तथा । भवेथा गुह राज्यं हि दुरारक्षतमं मतम् ॥७२॥
ततस्तं समनुज्ञाप्य गुहमिक्ष्वाकुनन्दनः । जगाम तूर्णमव्यग्रः सभार्यः सहलक्ष्मणः ॥७३॥
स तु दृष्ट्वा नदीतीरे नावमिक्ष्वाकुनन्दनः । तितीर्षुः शीघ्रगां गङ्गामिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥७४॥
आरोह त्वं नरव्याघ्र स्थितां नावमिमां शनैः । सीतां चारोपयान्वक्षं परिगृह्य मनस्विनीम् ॥७५॥
स भ्रातुः शासनं श्रुत्वा सर्वमप्रतिकूलयन् । आरोप्य मैथिलीं पूर्वमारुरोहात्मवांस्ततः ॥७६॥
अथारुरोह तेजस्वी स्वयं लक्ष्मणपूर्वजः । ततो निषादाधिपतिर्गुहो ज्ञातीनचोदयत् ॥७७॥
राघवोऽपि महातेजा नावमारुह्य तां ततः । ब्रह्मवत् क्षत्रवच्चैव जजाप हितमात्मनः ॥७८॥
आचम्य च यथाशास्त्रं नदीं तां सह सीतया । प्रणमत् प्रीतिसंतुष्टो लक्ष्मणश्च महारथः ॥७९॥
अनुज्ञाय सुमन्त्रं च सबलं चैव तं गुहम् । आस्थाय नावं रामस्तु चोदयामास नाविकान् ॥८०॥
ततस्तैश्चालिता नौका कर्णधारसमाहिता । शुभस्फ्यवेगाभिहता शीघ्रं सलिलमत्यगात् ॥८१॥
मध्यं तु समनुप्राप्य भागीरथ्यास्त्वनिन्दिता । वैदेही प्राञ्जलिर्भूत्वा तां नदीमिदमब्रवीत् ॥८२॥

Having (temporarily) adopted the ways of a hermit along with Lakṣmaṇa and accepted the vow of an ascetic life, Śrī Rāma then spoke (as follows) to his helpmate, Guha:—(71) "Remain vigilant in the matter of your army, exchequer, fortress and the people, O Guha; for a state is recognized as most difficult to protect." (72) Having duly taken leave of the celebrated Guha, and remaining undisturbed (all the time), Śrī Rāma (the delight of the Ikṣwākus) then quickly departed along with his consort (Sītā) and with Lakṣmaṇa. (73) Beholding a boat on the bank of the river and keen to cross the swift-flowing Ganga, Śrī Rāma (the delight of the Ikṣwākus) for his part spoke (to Lakṣmaṇa) as follows:—(74) "Holding the boat standing there (and thereby steadying it), help the timid Sītā to get into it slowly and step (you) into it forthwith, O lion among men!" (75) Hearing the command of his (elder) brother and helping Sītā (a princess of Mithilā) to get into the boat first, the self-possessed Lakṣmaṇa stepped into the boat afterwards, (thus acting in full conformity with his brother's command). (76) The glorious Rāma (elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa) himself got into the boat last; and after that Guha, the ruler of the Niṣādas, commanded his kinsmen to row the boat (across the stream). (77) Having got into the aforesaid boat, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), for his part, who was possessed of unique splendour, then recited a sacred text (दैवी नावम् etc.) fit for the Brahmans and Kṣatriyas alike and conducive to his own good. (78) Nay, sipping the water of the Ganga according to the scriptural ordinance and feeling highly gratified, Śrī Rāma with Sītā bowed low to that river and Lakṣmaṇa, the great car-warrior, followed suit. (79) Further, bidding farewell to Sumantra as well as to the celebrated Guha and his army and, occupying his seat in the boat, Śrī Rāma for his part urged the boatmen to row the boat. (80) Rowed by the boatmen and directed by the helmsman, the boat, propelled by the swift movement of the beautiful oars, moved swiftly across the water. (81) Having duly reached the middle of the Ganga, Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom), for her part, who was irreproachable (in every way), spoke as follows with joined palms to the said river:—(82)

पुत्रो दशरथस्यायं महाराजस्य धीमतः । निदेशं पालयत्वेनं गङ्गे त्वदभिरक्षितः ॥८३॥
चतुर्दश हि वर्षाणि समग्राण्युष्य कानने । भ्रात्रा सह मया चैव पुनः प्रत्यागमिष्यति ॥८४॥
ततस्त्वां देवि सुभगे क्षेमेण पुनरागता । यक्ष्ये प्रमुदिता गङ्गे सर्वकामसमृद्धिनी ॥८५॥
त्वं हि त्रिपथगे देवि ब्रह्मलोकं समक्षसे । भार्या चोदधिराजस्य लोकेऽस्मिन् सम्प्रदृश्यसे ॥८६॥
सा त्वां देवि नमस्यामि प्रशंसामि च शोभने । प्राप्तराज्ये नरव्याघ्रे शिवेन पुनरागते ॥८७॥
गवां शतसहस्रं च वस्त्राण्यन्नं च पेशलम् । ब्राह्मणेभ्यः प्रदास्यामि तव प्रियचिकीर्षया ॥८८॥
सुराघटसहस्रेण मांसभूतौदनेन च । यक्ष्ये त्वां प्रीयतां देवि पुरीं पुनरुपागता ॥८९॥
यानि त्वत्तीरवासीनि दैवतानि च सन्ति हि । तानि सर्वाणि यक्ष्यामि तीर्थान्यायतनानि च ॥९०॥
पुनरेव महाबाहुर्मया भ्रात्रा च संगतः । अयोध्यां वनवासात् तु प्रविशत्वनघोऽनघे ॥९१॥

"Protected on all sides by you, O (mother) Ganga, may this son of the wise Emperor Daśaratha execute this decree (of the emperor to remain in exile for fourteen years). (83) When, having sojourned in the forest for full fourteen years, he arrives at your bank once more with his (younger) brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and myself, then, returned in safety, O blessed goddess, with all my desires fulfilled, O Ganga, I shall worship you with great delight. (84-85) Since you, O goddess flowing through heaven, earth and the subterranean regions, include (in your basin) the realm of

Brahmā (the outermost of the six spheres enveloping the earth) and are vividly seen on this (terrestrial) plane as a consort of the Ocean-king (the deity presiding over the oceans), I, Sītā, greet and extol you, O charming goddess ! When Śrī Rāma (a tiger among men) has safely returned and regained his throne, I shall give away a lakh of cows as well as articles of wearing apparel and food-stuffs of excellent quality to the Brahmans with intent to please you. (86—88) Having returned to Ayodhya I shall worship you with a thousand (and one) articles not available (even) to gods as well as with lands free from revenue, raiment and cooked rice*. Be pleased (with me), O goddess ! (89) Nay, I shall without doubt offer worship to all the deities that have their abode on your banks as well as to all sacred spots and sites (on your banks). (90) May the sinless Rāma (who is possessed of mighty arms) for his part re-enter Ayodhya from the forest along with Lakṣmaṇa and myself, O sinless goddess !" (91)

तथा सम्भाषमाणा सा सीता गङ्गामनिन्दिता । दक्षिणा दक्षिणं तीरं क्षिप्रमेवाभ्युपागमत् ॥९२॥
तीरं तु समनुप्राप्य नावं हित्वा नरर्षभः । प्रातिष्ठत सह भ्रात्रा वैदेह्या च परंतपः ॥९३॥
अथाब्रवीन्महाबाहुः सुमित्रानन्दवर्धनम् । भव संरक्षणार्थाय सजने विजनेऽपि वा ॥९४॥
अवश्यं रक्षणं कार्यं मद्विधैर्विजने वने । अग्रतो गच्छ सौमित्रे सीता त्वामनुगच्छतु ॥९५॥
पृष्ठतोऽनुगमिष्यामि सीतां त्वां चानुपालयन् । अन्योन्यस्य हि नो रक्षा कर्तव्या पुरुषर्षभ ॥९६॥
नहि तावदतिक्रान्तासुकरा काचन क्रिया । अद्य दुःखं तु वैदेही वनवासस्य वेत्स्यति ॥९७॥
प्रनष्टजनसम्बाधं क्षेत्रारामविवर्जितम् । विषमं च प्रपातं च वनमद्य प्रवेक्ष्यति ॥९८॥

Praying to Ganga as aforesaid, the celebrated Sītā, who was irreproachable (in every way) and devoted to her husband, speedily reached the southern bank. (92) Having safely reached the (aforesaid) bank and leaving the boat, Śrī Rāma (a jewel among men), the chastiser of his foes, for his part, proceeded (further) with his (younger) brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom). (93) The mighty-armed prince now said to Lakṣmaṇa (who heightened the joy of Sumitrā). "Be prepared for the protection of Sītā in the inhabited as well as in the uninhabited areas. (94) Protection needs must be afforded in an unin-habited forest to the weaker sex by men like me (who maintain the moral order). (Therefore) lead the way, O son of Sumitrā, (and) let Sītā follow you. (95) I (for my part) shall follow in the rear, protecting Sītā as well as yourself from behind; for protection must be vouchsafed by us to one another, O jewel among men ! (96) In fact no severe trial has gone out of possibility as yet. (On the other hand) Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) will experience only today, the suffering entailed by a sojourn in the forest. (97) She will enter today a forest in which traces of blades of grass etc. having been crushed under the feet of men are no longer visible (there being no traffic of men), which is utterly devoid of fields and gardens, has a rugged surface and is full of yawning chasms etc." (98)

---

* According to the interpretation given above, which commands the support of a famous commentator of the Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa, the author of the gloss going by the name of "Rāmāyaṇa-Śiromaṇi", the compound 'सुराघटसहस्रेण' will have to be split up as 'सुरेषु देवेषु न घटन्ते न सन्तीत्यर्थः, तेषां सहस्रम् तेन'. The other compound 'मांसभूतौदनेन' too should be split up as 'मा नास्ति अंसो राजभागो यस्यां सा एव भूः पृथ्वी च उतं वस्त्रं च ओदनं च, एतेषां समाहारः, तेन'. Like 'Aṃsa', the word 'Amsa' too bears the sense of 'share' (revenue) according to Sanskrit lexicons.

श्रुत्वा रामस्य वचनं प्रतस्थे लक्ष्मणोऽग्रतः । अनन्तरं च सीताया राघवो रघुनन्दनः ॥९९॥
गतं तु गङ्गापरपारमाशु रामं सुमन्त्रः सततं निरीक्ष्य ।
अध्वप्रकर्षाद् विनिवृत्तदृष्टिर्मुमोच बाष्पं व्यथितस्तपस्वी ॥१००॥
स लोकपालप्रतिमप्रभावस्तीर्त्वा महात्मा वरदो महानदीम् ।
ततः समृद्धाञ्छुभसस्यमालिनः क्षणेन वत्सान् मुदितानुपागमत् ॥१०१॥
तौ तत्र हत्वा चतुरो महामृगान् वराहमृश्यं पृषतं महारुरुम् ।
आदाय मेध्यं त्वरितं बुभुक्षितौ वासाय काले ययतुर्वनस्पतिम् ॥१०२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्विपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५२ ॥

Hearing the advice of Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa led the way (Sītā following him), and immediately after Sītā followed Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the delight of the Raghus. (99) Constantly gazing on Śrī Rāma, who had soon reached the other bank of the Ganga, and his vision having failed due to the long distance (covered by the exiles in the meantime) Sumantra, who was full of remorse and afflicted (too), shed tears (of grief over his separation from Śrī Rāma). (100) Having crossed the great river (Ganga); the high-souled Śrī Rāma, who vied in glory with the guardians of the spheres and was capable of bestowing boons, thence reached in a moment the prosperous and happy land of Vatsa (the land comprised between the Ganga and the Yamuna rivers), which contained rows of beautiful crops. (101) Having hunted (for love of sport) four large deer, *viz*, a Varāha, Ṛśya, Pṛṣata and Mahāruru (the four principal species of deer), and taking (with them articles of) food (consisting of fruits etc.) fit for being consigned as an oblation into the sacred fire, now that they felt hungry (after sport), the two brothers quickly sought (the foot of) a tree (where they had evidently stationed Sītā within their sight for the time they were engaged in sport), for taking rest (after supper) during the night. (102)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-two in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रिपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LIII

Apprehending trouble for Kausalyā and others at the hands of Kaikeyī, Śrī Rāma, who was seated at the foot of a banyan tree and was a past master in the art of persuasion, persuades Lakṣmaṇa to the best of his ability to return to Ayodhya. Lakṣmaṇa, however, pleads inability to survive in his absence and does not budge an inch from his resolution to stay with his eldest brother. Śrī Rāma, therefore, yields and sets his seal to his continuing with him during his exile.

स तं वृक्षं समासाद्य संध्यामन्वास्य पश्चिमाम् । रामो रमयतां श्रेष्ठ इति होवाच लक्ष्मणम् ॥ १ ॥

अद्येयं प्रथमा रात्रिर्याता जनपदाद् बहिः । या सुमन्त्रेण रहिता तां नोत्कण्ठितुमर्हसि ॥ २ ॥
जागर्तव्यमतन्द्रिभ्यामद्यप्रभृति रात्रिषु । योगक्षेमौ हि सीताया वर्तेते लक्ष्मणावयोः ॥ ३ ॥
रात्रिं कथंचिदेवेमां सौमित्रे वर्तयामहे । अपवर्तामहे भूमावास्तीर्य स्वयमर्जितैः ॥ ४ ॥
स तु संविश्य मेदिन्यां महार्हशयनोचितः । इमाः सौमित्रये रामो व्याजहार कथाः शुभाः ॥ ५ ॥

Having reached (the foot of) the aforesaid tree and worshipped the evening twilight, Śrī Rāma, the foremost of those affording delight to others, spoke to Lakṣmaṇa as follows: so the tradition goes:—(1) "This night, which has overtaken us today outside the territory inhabited by our own people, is the first night which will pass without Sumantra. You ought not to sorrow over it. (2) Remaining free from lassitude we must both keep awake during the (coming) nights; for the procuration of what is needed by Sītā and the protection of her person and honour etc. are our care, O Lakṣmaṇa! (3) Let us pass this night any how, O son of Sumitrā! Let us lie down on the ground, covering it with straw, leaves and so on procured with our own hands." (4) Sitting on the (bare) ground, the said Śrī Rāma, for his part, who was accustomed to costly beds, addressed the following suitable remarks to Lakṣmaṇa:—(5)

ध्रुवमद्य महाराजो दुःखं स्वपिति लक्ष्मण । कृतकामा तु कैकेयी तुष्टा भवितुमर्हति ॥ ६ ॥
सा हि देवी महाराजं कैकेयी राज्यकारणात् । अपि न च्यावयेत् प्राणान् दृष्ट्वा भरतमागतम् ॥ ७ ॥
अनाथश्च हि वृद्धश्च मया चैव विना कृतः । किं करिष्यति कामात्मा कैकेय्या वशमागतः ॥ ८ ॥
इदं व्यसनमालोक्य राज्ञश्च मतिविभ्रमम् । काम एवार्थधर्माभ्यां गरीयानिति मे मतिः ॥ ९ ॥
को ह्यविद्वानपि पुमान् प्रमदायाः कृते त्यजेत् । छन्दानुवर्तिनं पुत्रं तातो मामिव लक्ष्मण ॥१०॥
सुखी बत सुभार्यश्च भरतः केकयीसुतः । मुदितान् कोसलानेको यो भोक्ष्यत्यधिराजवत् ॥११॥
स हि राज्यस्य सर्वस्य सुखमेकं भविष्यति । ताते तु वयसातीते मयि चारण्यमाश्रिते ॥१२॥

"Surely the emperor must be sleeping uncomfortably to night, O Lakṣmaṇa! Kaikeyī, on the other hand, who has her desired object accomplished, ought to feel gratified. (6) Seeing Bharata returned (from his maternal grandfather's), Queen Kaikeyī, I am afraid, may not actually rob the emperor of his (very) life for the sake of sovereignty. (7) What will the king,—whose desire (to see me installed as Prince Regent) lingers (even now) in his mind and who has fallen into the clutches of Kaikeyī, (nay) who is aged and (therefore) helpless and has (further) been disunited from me,—do (to foil her designs upon his life)? (8) Viewing this evil plight (of mine) and the perversion of the king's mind, I (am led to) think that gratification of the senses is of greater moment than earthly gain and religious merit. (9) What man, even though ignorant, would actually abandon for the sake of a woman a son following his will, (even) as father has abandoned me, O Lakṣmaṇa? (10) Ah, Kaikeyī's son, Bharata (alone) is happy and the spouse of a lucky woman in that he is going to rule over the prosperous kingdom of Kosala like an overlord, his claim being disputed by none! (11) For, he will enjoy the undivided blessings of the entire kingdom, now that father is superannuated and I have retired to the forest. (12)

अर्थधर्मौ परित्यज्य यः काममनुवर्तते । एवमापद्यते क्षिप्रं राजा दशरथो यथा ॥१३॥
मन्ये दशरथान्ताय मम प्रव्राजनाय च । कैकेयी सौम्य सम्प्राप्ता राज्याय भरतस्य च ॥१४॥

अपीदानीं तु कैकेयी सौभाग्यमदमोहिता । कौसल्या च सुमित्रां च सा प्रबाधेत मत्कृते ॥१५॥
मातास्मत्कारणाद् देवी सुमित्रा दुःखमावसेत् । अयोध्यामित एव त्वं काले प्रविश लक्ष्मण ॥१६॥
अहमेको गमिष्यामि सीतया सह दण्डकान् । अनाथाया हि नाथस्त्वं कौसल्याया भविष्यसि ॥१७॥
क्षुद्रकर्मा हि कैकेयी द्वेषादन्यायमाचरेत् । परिदद्याद्धि धर्मज्ञ गरं ते मम मातरम् ॥१८॥
नूनं जात्यन्तरे तात स्त्रियः पुत्रैर्वियोजिताः । जनन्या मम सौमित्रे तदद्यैतदुपस्थितम् ॥१९॥

"He who pursues sensuous pleasure neglecting wealth and virtue soon comes to grief in the same way as King Daśaratha has. (13) I believe, O good brother, that Kaikeyī came (to this house) to bring about the end of Daśaratha, to send me into exile and to secure kingship for Bharata. (14) Blinded by pride of good fortune, I am afraid, the aforesaid Kaikeyī may even now persecute Kausalyā and Sumitrā too because of their relation with me (and you). (15) Your mother, Queen Sumitrā, is likely to suffer hardship because of her affinity to us. From this very place (therefore), O Lakṣmaṇa, proceed you to Ayodhya next morning. (16) I shall proceed to the Daṇḍaka forest alone with Sītā, while you will be a protector to Kausalyā, who will be left without a protector (after the death of King Daśaratha). (17) Kaikeyī of vile deeds may undoubtedly resort to unfair means due to malice and even administer poison to your mother and mine, O knower of what is right! (18) In some other (past) birth, O dear brother, women must have been deprived of their sons by my mother (Kausalyā). That act (of hers alone), O Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), has recoiled on her in the form of this visitation. (19)

मया हि चिरपुष्टेन दुःखसंवर्धितेन च । विप्रयुज्यत कौसल्या फलकाले धिगस्तु माम् ॥२०॥
मा स्म सीमन्तिनी काचिज्जनयेत् पुत्रमीदृशम् । सौमित्रे योऽहमम्बाया दद्मि शोकमनन्तकम् ॥२१॥
मन्ये प्रीतिविशिष्टा सा मत्तो लक्ष्मण सारिका । यत्तस्याः श्रूयते वाक्यं शुक पादमरेर्दश ॥२२॥
शोचन्त्याश्चाल्पभाग्याया न किंचिदुपकुर्वता । पुत्रेण किमपुत्राया मया कार्यमरिंदम ॥२३॥
अल्पभाग्या हि मे माता कौसल्या रहिता मया । शेते परमदुःखार्ता पतिता शोकसागरे ॥२४॥
एको ह्यहमयोध्यां च पृथिवीं चापि लक्ष्मण । तरेयमिषुभिः क्रुद्धो ननु वीर्यमकारणम् ॥२५॥
अधर्मभयभीतश्च परलोकस्य चानघ । तेन लक्ष्मण नाद्याहमात्मानमभिषेचये ॥२६॥

"At a time when Kausalyā (my mother) should have found her labours repaid by me, she has been deprived of my company by me, who was nurtured by her for long years and brought up with (great) pains. Woe to me! (20) Let no matron give birth to such a son as myself, who, O Lakṣmaṇa, have inflicted endless sorrow on my mother! (21) I believe that myna (which is kept as a pet by mother Kausalyā), O Lakṣmaṇa, is more affectionate (towards my mother) than I, since from her are heard the words 'Bite, O parrot, the foot of the enemy (of our master and thereby render him incapable of marching against our master).' (22) What purpose of my grieving mother of poor luck, who is as good as issueless, can be served by me, her son, who does no good to her, O chastiser of foes? (23) Of poor luck indeed is my mother, Kausalyā, who, bereft as she is of me, is stricken with great agony and lies plunged in a sea of grief. (24) When enraged I can surely subdue with my arrows single-handed not only (the kingdom of) Ayodhya but the earth as well, O Lakṣmaṇa! But

(show of) valour is not (always) conducive to good in the other world. (25) I am afraid of sin (that will be incurred by me if I fail to help my father in implementing the boons conferred by him on Kaikeyī) as well as of (ruining my prospects in) the other world, O sinless Lakṣmaṇa ! Hence I do not install myself in the office of Prince Regent (by force) today." (26)

एतदन्यच्च करुणं विलप्य विजने बहु । अश्रुपूर्णमुखो दीनो निशि तूष्णीमुपाविशत् ॥२७॥
विलापोपरतं रामं गतार्चिषमिवानलम् । समुद्रमिव निर्वेगमाश्वासयत लक्ष्मणः ॥२८॥
ध्रुवमद्य पुरी राम अयोध्याऽऽयुधिनां वर । निष्प्रभा त्वयि निष्क्रान्ते गतचन्द्रेव शर्वरी ॥२९॥
नैतदौपयिकं राम यदिदं परितप्यसे । विषादयसि सीतां च मां चैव पुरुषर्षभ ॥३०॥
न च सीता त्वया हीना न चाहमपि राघव । मुहूर्तमपि जीवावो जलान्मत्स्याविवोद्धृतौ ॥३१॥
नहि तातं न शत्रुघ्नं न सुमित्रां परंतप । द्रष्टुमिच्छेयमद्याहं स्वर्गं चापि त्वया विना ॥३२॥

Having wailed piteously as aforesaid and in many other ways in that lonely forest, Śrī Rāma sat quiet during the night, afflicted as he was, his face bathed in tears. (27) Lakṣmaṇa comforted Śrī Rāma as follows when the latter had ceased lamenting and looked like a fire whose flames had gone out and a sea that had lost its vehemence:—(28) "The city of Ayodhya, O Rāma, now that you have come away from it, has undoubtedly been divested of its splendour and resembles a night without the moon, O jewel among armed warriors ! (29) It is not desirable, O Rāma, that you should grieve in this way. You make Sītā and myself too and (thereby), O jewel among men ! (30) Bereft of you, O scion of Raghu, neither Sītā nor I myself can survive even for a short while any more than fish taken out of water. (31) Today I wish to see neither father nor Śatrughna (my younger brother) nor Sumitrā (my own mother) nor even heaven without you, O tormentor of foes !" (32)

ततस्तत्र समासीनौ नातिदूरे निरीक्ष्य ताम् । न्यग्रोधे सुकृतां शय्यां भेजाते धर्मवत्सलौ ॥३३॥

स लक्ष्मणस्योत्तमपुष्कलं वचो निशम्य चैवं वनवासमादरात् ।
समाः समस्ता विदधे परंतपः प्रपद्य धर्मं सुचिराय राघवः ॥३४॥
ततस्तु तस्मिन् विजने महाबलौ महावने राघववंशवर्धनौ ।
न तौ भयं सम्भ्रममभ्युपेयतुर्यथैव सिंहौ गिरिसानुगोचरौ ॥३५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्रिपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५३ ॥

Perceiving a bed decently prepared (by Lakṣmaṇa) at the foot of the banyan tree not very far (from the place occupied by them), while they were comfortably seated, there, Śrī Rāma and Sītā, who were tenderly alive to their duty, then sought the bed. (33) Hearing attentively the excellently-worded and comprehensive submission of Lakṣmaṇa reproduced above, and embracing for a fairly lengthy period the course of conduct prescribed for hermits, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the tormentor of foes, resolved to spend all the years (of his exile) with Lakṣmaṇa. (34) Thenceforward the two exceptionally mighty princes (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), the promoters of the race of Raghu, never experienced fear or agitation (while dwelling) in that great lonely forest any more than a couple of lions living on a mountain-peak. (35)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-three in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुःपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LIV

Set out on his journey for the Daṇḍaka forest with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, Śrī Rāma reaches at dusk the hermitage of Sage Bharadwāja in the vicinity of the confluence of the holy Ganga and Yamuna rivers. Paying due honours to Śrī Rāma and his party, the sage recommends Chitrakoot as the fittest place for him to sojourn in. Spending the night in discourses on various topics with him, the sage grants him leave early next morning to depart for Chitrakoot.

ते तु तस्मिन् महावृक्षे उषित्वा रजनीं शुभाम् । विमलेऽभ्युदिते सूर्ये तस्माद् देशात् प्रतस्थिरे ॥ १ ॥
यत्र भागीरथीं गङ्गां यमुनाभिप्रवर्तते । जग्मुस्तं देशमुद्दिश्य विगाह्य सुमहद् वनम् ॥ २ ॥
ते भूमिभागान् विविधान् देशांश्चापि मनोहरान् । अदृष्टपूर्वान् पश्यन्तस्तत्र तत्र यशस्विनः ॥ ३ ॥
यथा क्षेमेण सम्पश्यन् पुष्पितान् विविधान् द्रुमान् । निवृत्तमात्रे दिवसे रामः सौमित्रिमब्रवीत् ॥ ४ ॥
प्रयागमभितः पश्य सौमित्रे धूममुत्तमम् । अग्नेर्भगवतः केतुं मन्ये संनिहितो मुनिः ॥ ५ ॥
नूनं प्राप्ताः स्म सम्भेदं गङ्गायमुनयोर्वयम् । तथाहि श्रूयते शब्दो वारिणोर्वारिघर्षजः ॥ ६ ॥
दारूणि परिभिन्नानि वनजैरुपजीविभिः । छिन्नाश्चाप्याश्रमे चैते दृश्यन्ते विविधा द्रुमाः ॥ ७ ॥

Having spent the beautiful night under that big tree, the party for their part set out from that place when the sun had clearly risen. (1) Travelling across a fairly extensive forest they proceeded in the direction of that region where the Yamuna rushes to meet the Ganga (associated with the name of Emperor Bhagīratha, who had the credit of bringing down the stream to the terrestrial plane by dint of his devotion and austerities in order to purify the ashes of his departed great granduncles). (2) Beholding here and there various tracts of land and soul-captivating regions never seen before, the illustrious travellers moved on. (3) Gazing on the various trees laden with blossoms while travelling at ease, Śrī Rāma said to Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) when the day had just ended :—"Behold, O son of Sumitrā, agreeable (fragrant) smoke, the emblem of the glorious god of fire, near Prayag (the confluence of the holy Ganga and Yamuna rivers). (From this) I conclude the sage (Bharadwāja) is at hand. (4-5) We have surely reached the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna rivers; for the noise produced by the clashing of the waters of the two streams is heard. (6) Logs of wood hewn by menliving by the produce of the forest, as also the trees of various kinds (thus) dismembered are seen in the hermitage here." (7)

धन्विनौ तौ सुखं गत्वा लम्बमाने दिवाकरे । गङ्गायमुनयोः संधौ प्रापतुर्निलयं मुनेः ॥ ८ ॥
रामस्त्वाश्रममासाद्य त्रासयन् मृगपक्षिणः । गत्वा मुहूर्तमध्वानं भरद्वाजमुपागमत् ॥ ९ ॥
ततस्त्वाश्रममासाद्य मुनेर्दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणौ । सीतयानुगतौ वीरौ दूरादेवावतस्थतुः ॥१०॥
प्रविश्य महात्मानमृषिं शिष्यगणैर्वृतम् । संशितव्रतमेकाग्रं तपसा लब्धचक्षुषम् ॥११॥

हुताग्निहोत्रं दृष्ट्वैव महाभागः कृताञ्जलिः । रामः सौमित्रिणा सार्धं सीतया चाभ्यवादयत् ॥१२॥
न्यवेदयत चात्मानं तस्मै लक्ष्मणपूर्वजः । पुत्रौ दशरथस्यावां भगवन् रामलक्ष्मणौ ॥१३॥
भार्या ममेयं कल्याणी वैदेही जनकात्मजा । मां चानुयाता विजनं तपोवनमनिन्दिता ॥१४॥
पित्रा प्रव्राज्यमानं मां सौमित्रिरनुजः प्रियः । अयमन्वगमद् भ्राता वनमेव धृतव्रतः ॥१५॥
पित्रा नियुक्ता भगवन् प्रवेक्ष्यामस्तपोवनम् । धर्ममेवाचरिष्यामस्तत्र मूलफलाशनाः ॥१६॥

Walking at ease the aforesaid two archers reached the outskirts of the sage's dwelling in the space intervening the Ganga and the Yamuna, while the sun was going down. (8) Having reached the precincts of the hermitage and scaring the beasts and birds (of the locality by his very appearance as a bowman) and covering the intervening distance, which could be covered in a short while, Śrī Rāma for his part approached the hermitage of Bharadwāja. (9) Arriving at the hermitage, the two valiant princes, for their part, who longed for a sight of the sage and were accompanied by Sītā, then halted at some distance (awaiting his permission to see him). (10) (Eventually) entering the hut (occupied by the sage) after obtaining his permission through some pupil, and beholding the high-souled sage of rigid vows, who had acquired omniscience through askesis and sat absorbed in meditation in the midst of hosts of his pupils, having poured oblations into the sacred fire, the celebrated and highly blessed Śrī Rāma, with Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) and Sītā, greeted him with joined palms. (11-12) Nay, Śrī Rāma (the eldest brother of Lakṣmaṇa) introduced himself to the sage in the following words :—"We are Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, sons of Emperor Daśaratha, O venerable sage ! Here is my blessed and irreproachable wife, a princess of the Videha kingdom and daughter of King Janaka, who has followed me to the lonely forest suited for religious austerities. (13-14) While I was being exiled by my father, this my beloved younger (half-) brother, Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), of firm vows has also followed me to the forest. (15) Ordered by our father, O venerable sage, we shall retire to a forest suited for austerities and shall practise virtue alone there, living on roots and fruits (only)." (16)

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा राजपुत्रस्य धीमतः । उपानयत धर्मात्मा गामर्घ्यमुदकं ततः ॥१७॥
नानाविधानन्नरसान् वन्यमूलफलाश्रयान् । तेभ्यो ददौ तप्ततपा वासं चैवाभ्यकल्पयत् ॥१८॥
मृगपक्षिभिरासीनो मुनिभिश्च समन्ततः । राममागतमभ्यर्च्य स्वागतेनागतं मुनिः ॥१९॥
प्रतिगृह्य तु तामर्चामुपविष्टं स राघवम् । भरद्वाजोऽब्रवीद् वाक्यं धर्मयुक्तमिदं तदा ॥२०॥
चिरस्य खलु काकुत्स्थ पश्याम्यहमुपागतम् । श्रुतं तव मया चैव विवासनमकारणम् ॥२१॥
अवकाशो विविक्तोऽयं महानद्योः समागमे । पुण्यश्च रमणीयश्च वसत्विह भवान् सुखम् ॥२२॥

Hearing the aforesaid submission of the sagacious prince (Śrī Rāma), Sage Bharadwāja (whose mind is given to piety) thereupon offered to him (by way of a present due to an honoured guest) a bull as well as water to wash his hands with (as a preliminary to the hospitality that was to follow). (17) The sage (who had practised austerities) offered them delicacies of every description prepared from wild roots and fruits, and also arranged accommodation for them. (18) Honouring with words of welcome Śrī Rāma, who had approached him by slow stages (pausing a little at intervals and then advancing meticulously out of respect), the said Sage Bharadwāja, seated in the company of beasts and birds as well as of hermits all round, now addressed the following words, consistent with righteousness, to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who had since taken his seat after accepting the aforesaid hospitality (offered by the sage):—(19-20) "In fact I have since long been expecting your arrival, O scion of Kakutstha! And your gratuitous exile has also been heard of by me. (21) This open stretch of land at the confluence of the two great rivers is not only secluded but sacred and lovely too. Dwell you here comfortably." (22)

एवमुक्तस्तु वचनं भरद्वाजेन राघवः । प्रत्युवाच शुभं वाक्यं रामः सर्वहिते रतः ॥२३॥
भगवन्नित आसन्नः पौरजानपदो जनः । सुदर्शमिह मां प्रेक्ष्य मन्येऽहमिममाश्रमम् ॥२४॥
आगमिष्यति वैदेहीं मां चापि प्रेक्षको जनः । अनेन कारणेनाहमिह वासं न रोचये ॥२५॥
एकान्ते पश्य भगवन्नाश्रमस्थानमुत्तमम् । रमते यत्र वैदेही सुखार्हा जनकात्मजा ॥२६॥
एतच्छ्रुत्वा शुभं वाक्यं भरद्वाजो महामुनिः । राघवस्य तु तद् वाक्यमर्थग्राहकमब्रवीत् ॥२७॥
दशक्रोश इतस्तात गिरिर्यस्मिन् निवत्स्यसि । महर्षिसेवितः पुण्यः पर्वतः शुभदर्शनः ॥२८॥
गोलाङ्गूलानुचरितो वानरर्क्षनिषेवितः । चित्रकूट इति ख्यातो गन्धमादनसंनिभः ॥२९॥
यावता चित्रकूटस्य नरः शृङ्गाण्यवेक्षते । कल्याणानि समाधत्ते न पापे कुरुते मनः ॥३०॥
ऋषयस्तत्र बहवो विहृत्य शरदां शतम् । तपसा दिवमारूढाः कपालशिरसा सह ॥३१॥
प्रविविक्तमहं मन्ये तं वासं भवतः सुखम् । इह वा वनवासाय वस राम मया सह ॥३२॥

Addressed in these words by Bharadwāja, Śrī Rāma, a scion of Raghu, for his part, who was devoted to the good of all, replied in the following agreeable words:—(23) "The people of the city as well as of the state (of Ayodhya), O venerable sir, are proximate to this place. Finding me easy to behold at this place, people keen to gaze on Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) as well as on myself, I presume, will frequent this hermitage. For this reason I do not approve of my sojourn here. (24-25) (Pray, therefore) look for some excellent site for a hermitage in some lonely place, O venerable sir, where Sītā (a princess of the Videha dynasty), daughter of King Janaka, who deserves (every) comfort, may find delight." (26) Hearing this pious submission (of Śrī Rāma), the great sage Bharadwāja for his part made the following answer pointing out the place sought by Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu):—(27) Sixty* miles from this place, O dear son, lies a sacred mountain, on which you will take up your abode, which is inhabited by great Ṛṣis and is charming to look at and has a number of offshoots. (28) It is infested by the black species of monkeys with a long tail (of the size of a cow-tail), is haunted by apes and bears, is known by the name of Chitrakoot and closely resembles the Gandhamādana mountain (in beauty). (29) So long as a man beholds the peaks of the Chitrakoot hill he devotes himself entirely to virtuous acts and never sets his mind on sin. (30) Having spent a hundred winters in austerities as though in sport on that mountain, many a seer with a head hoary (through age) as a (bare) skull ascended to heaven. (31) I consider that mountain to be a very lonely and comfortable place for you to live in. Else dwell with me here (at the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna) for the period of exile. (32)

---

* The author of the Commentary known by the name of "Rāmāyaṇa-Śiromaṇi" construes the word 'दश' in the sense of thirty, treating it as an example of the compound एकशेष द्वन्द्व, in which only one member of the compound is retained, the others being left out as in "वृक्षाः" (which is split up as वृक्षश्च वृक्षश्च वृक्षश्च). Here too the word 'दश' will have to be split up as दश च, दश च, दश च (meaning three times ten or thirty). The distance of Chitrakoot from Prayag is reckoned as 28 Kosas or 56 miles and thus approximate to the figure worked out by the said commentator. According to the latest measurements the distance is calculated as eighty miles. Making allowance for the difference in the standards of measurement obtaining in those days the figure arrived at by the learned commentator appears to be fairly correct.

स रामं सर्वकामैस्तं भरद्वाजः प्रियातिथिम् । सभार्यं सह च भ्रात्रा प्रतिजग्राह हर्षयन् ॥३३॥
तस्य प्रयागे रामस्य तं महर्षिमुपेयुषः । प्रपन्ना रजनी पुण्या चित्राः कथयतः कथाः ॥३४॥
सीतातृतीयः काकुत्स्थः परिश्रान्तः सुखोचितः । भरद्वाजाश्रमे रम्ये तां रात्रिमवसत् सुखम् ॥३५॥
प्रभातायां तु शर्वर्यां भरद्वाजमुपागमत् । उवाच नरशार्दूलो मुनिं ज्वलिततेजसम् ॥३६॥
शर्वरीं भगवन्नद्य सत्यशील तवाश्रमे । उषिताः स्मोऽह वसतिमनुजानातु नो भवान् ॥३७॥
रात्र्यां तु तस्यां व्युष्टायां भरद्वाजोऽब्रवीदिदम् । मधुमूलफलोपेतं चित्रकूटं व्रजेति ह ॥३८॥
वासमौपयिकं मन्ये तव राम महाबल । नानानगगणोपेतः किंनरोरगसेवितः ॥३९॥
मयूरनादाभिरतो गजराजनिषेवितः । गम्यतां भवता शैलश्चित्रकूटः स विश्रुतः ॥४०॥
पुण्यश्च रमणीयश्च बहुमूलफलायुतः । तत्र कुञ्जरयूथानि मृगयूथानि चैव हि ॥४१॥
विचरन्ति वनान्तेषु तानि द्रक्ष्यसि राघव ।
सरित्प्रस्रवणप्रस्थान् दरीकन्दरनिर्झरान् । चरतः सीतया सार्धं नन्दिष्यति मनस्तव ॥४२॥
प्रहृष्टकोयष्टिभकोकिलस्वनैर्विनोदयन्तं च सुखं परं शिवम् ।
मृगैश्च मत्तैर्बहुभिश्च कुञ्जरैः सुरम्यमासाद्य समावसाश्रयम् ॥४३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुःपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५४ ॥

The celebrated Sage Bharadwāja entertained his aforesaid beloved guest, Śrī Rāma, with his consort (Sītā) and with his (younger half-) brother (Lakṣmaṇa) delighting them with all desired objects. (33) While Śrī Rāma, having approached that great seer at Prayag (the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna), was talking (with him) on various topics, the delightful night arrived. (34) Greatly fatigued, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), who was accompanied by Sītā as the third (Lakṣmaṇa being the second) and deserved (all) comforts, happily spent that night at the lovely hermitage of Bharadwāja. (35) The night having ended in dawn, Śrī Rāma (a tiger among men) approached and spoke (as follows) to Sage Bharadwāja of resplendent glory:—(36) "We have lodged tonight at your hermitage, O venerable sir ! (Pray) allow you us to proceed to the place fixed for our abode now, O sage given to truthfulness !" (37) That night having come to an end, Bharadwāja (when requested as above) replied for his part, they say, as follows:—"Proceed gladly to Chitrakoot, rich in honey, roots and fruits. (38) I deem it a fit place for your abode, O Rāma possessed of great strength ! Repair you to that well-known sacred and lovely mountain, Chitrakoot, which is adorned with clusters of trees of every description and frequented by Kinnaras and Nāgas, is rendered charming by the cries of peacocks and infested with lordly elephants and abounds in roots and fruits. Since herds of elephants as well as troops of deer roam about in the sylvan regions there, you will behold them, O scion of Raghu, as well as rivers, cascades, peaks of mountains, fissures in rocks, caves and rivulets, which will delight your mind as you roam about (in the woods) with Sītā. (39-42) Reaching the agreeable and highly blessed mountain, which entertains the visitors with the notes of the overjoyed Ṭiṭṭibha bird and cuckoo, is most delightful because of its many deer and elephants in rut and is fit for habitation, take up your abode on it. (43)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-four in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LV

Sage Bharadwāja tells Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, even as they set out on their journey to Chitrakoot, the route by which they should proceed. Accompanied by Sītā Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa cross the Yamuna on a raft prepared by themselves. In the evening they halt on the bank of the Yamuna along with Sītā, who is rejoiced to get fruits and blossoms of her liking.

उषित्वा रजनीं तत्र राजपुत्रावरिंदमौ । महर्षिमभिवाद्याथ जग्मतुस्तं गिरिं प्रति ॥ १ ॥
तेषां स्वस्त्ययनं चैव महर्षिः स चकार ह । प्रस्थितान् प्रेक्ष्य तांश्चैव पिता पुत्रानिवौरसान् ॥ २ ॥
ततः प्रचक्रमे वक्तुं वचनं स महामुनिः । भरद्वाजो महातेजा रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ॥ ३ ॥
गङ्गायमुनयोः संधिमासाद्य मनुजर्षभौ । कालिन्दीमनुगच्छेतां नदीं पश्चान्मुखाश्रिताम् ॥ ४ ॥
अथासाद्य तु कालिन्दीं प्रतिस्रोतः समागताम् ।
तस्यास्तीर्थं प्रचरितं प्रकामं प्रेक्ष्य राघव । तत्र यूयं प्लवं कृत्वा तरतांशुमतीं नदीम् ॥ ५ ॥
ततो न्यग्रोधमासाद्य महान्तं हरितच्छदम् । परीतं बहुभिर्वृक्षैः श्यामं सिद्धोपसेवितम् ॥ ६ ॥
तस्मिन् सीताञ्जलिं कृत्वा प्रयुञ्जीताशिषां क्रियाम् । समासाद्य च तं वृक्षं वसेद् वातिक्रमेत वा ॥ ७ ॥
क्रोशमात्रं ततो गत्वा नीलं प्रेक्ष्य च काननम् । सल्लकीबदरीमिश्रं रम्यं वंशैश्च यामुनैः ॥ ८ ॥
स पन्थाश्चित्रकूटस्य गतस्य बहुशो मया । रम्यो मार्दवयुक्तश्च दावैश्चैव विवर्जितः ॥ ९ ॥

Having spent the night there (at the hermitage of Sage Bharadwāja) and greeting the great seer, the two princes (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), the subduers of their foes, forthwith proceeded in the direction of the said mountain. (1) Nay, perceiving the (three) travellers about to start (on their journey), that great seer too, so the tradition goes, performed a religious rite ensuring their safe journey (scattering boiled rice on the ground and invoking blessings through the repetition of certain sacred texts) in the same way as a father would bless his own sons (and daughter-in-law). (2) Then that eminent sage, Bharadwāja, who was invested with great (spiritual) glory, proceeded to instruct Śrī Rāma, who was possessed of unfailing valour, as follows:—(3) "Reaching the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna, the two jewels among men (in you) should follow the river Yamuna, which has taken a westerly course (for some distance due to the great rush of the waters of the Ganga). (4) Then, approaching the Yamuna turned in an opposite direction, and carefully perceiving in it a passage (across the river) too much frequented, O scion of Raghu, cross you the river Yamuna (the deity presiding over which is a daughter of the sun-god) after preparing a raft. (5) Then, approaching an extensive banyan tree, full of dark green leaves and (therefore) going by the name of Śyāma (dark-green), (nay) surrounded by many (other) trees and visited by Siddhas, Sītā should, joining her palms, offer prayers to (the deity presiding over) the tree (for your safe return to Ayodhya). Again, duly reaching (the foot of) the aforesaid tree, she should halt (there awhile in the event of her feeling fatigued) or else pass beyond it. (6-7) After walking (a distance of) only two miles from that tree and beholding the Nīlavana, interspersed with Sallakī and jujube trees and charming with bamboos standing on the bank of the Yamuna, will be found that delightful way to Chitrakoot,—which has frequently been visited by me,—marked with smoothness and devoid of forest fires." (8-9)

इति पन्थानमादिश्य महर्षिः संन्यवर्तत । अभिवाद्य तथेत्युक्त्वा रामेण विनिवर्तितः ॥१०॥
उपावृत्ते मुनौ तस्मिन् रामो लक्ष्मणमब्रवीत् । कृतपुण्याः स्म भद्रं ते मुनिर्यन्नोऽनुकम्पते ॥११॥
इति तौ पुरुषव्याघ्रौ मन्त्रयित्वा मनस्विनौ । सीतामेवाग्रतः कृत्वा कालिन्दीं जग्मतुर्नदीम् ॥१२॥
अथासाद्य तु कालिन्दीं शीघ्रस्रोतस्विनीं नदीम् । चिन्तामापेदिरे सद्यो नदीजलतितीर्षवः ॥१३॥
तौ काष्ठसंघाटमथो चक्रतुः सुमहाप्लवम् । शुष्कैर्वंशैः समाकीर्णमुशीरैश्च समावृतम् ॥१४॥
ततो वैतसशाखाश्च जम्बुशाखाश्च वीर्यवान् । चकार लक्ष्मणश्छित्त्वा सीतायाः सुखमासनम् ॥१५॥
तत्र श्रियमिवाचिन्त्यां रामो दाशरथिः प्रियाम् । ईषत्स लज्जमानां तामध्यारोपयत प्लवम् ॥१६॥
पार्श्वे तत्र च वैदेह्या वसने भूषणानि च । प्लवे कठिनकाजं च रामश्चक्रे समाहितः ॥१७॥
आरोप्य सीतां प्रथमं संघाटं परिगृह्य तौ । ततः प्रतेरतुर्यत्तौ प्रीतौ दशरथात्मजौ ॥१८॥

Having thus pointed out the way (to Chitrakoot) and being urged by Śrī Rāma to return, after he had greeted the sage and said "I shall follow your instructions", the great seer (Bharadwāja) duly returned. (10) The aforesaid sage having returned, Śrī Rāma said to Lakṣmaṇa, "May prosperity attend on you! We have done meritorious deeds (in the past) in that the sage compassionates us." (11) Talking as aforesaid, and placing Sītā definitely at their head, the two high minded tigers among men headed towards the river Yamuna. (12) Reaching (the bank of) the river Yamuna, which flowed in a swift current, the (princely) travellers for their part fell a pondering, keen as they were to cross speedily the waters of the river. (13) The two brothers then prepared a fairly big raft consisting of a number of wooden logs (placed side by side), overspread with dry bamboos and covered all over with the fragrant roots of the Uśīra plant (Andropogon muricatus). (14) Then, cutting shoots of canes and twigs of the rose-apple tree, the powerful Lakṣmaṇa made a comfortable seat for Sītā. (15) Then the celebrated

Śrī Rāma, son of Daśaratha, helped Sītā, his beloved consort,—who vied with Śrī (the goddess of fortune) of unimaginable beauty and was feeling a bit abashed,—ascend the raft. (16) Śrī Rāma also carefully placed on the aforesaid raft the pair of her garments as well as her jewels as also the shovel and basket beside her. (17) Having first enabled Sītā to ascend the raft, holding the structure (themselves), the two sons of Daśaratha, full of delight, now cautiously began to row the raft. (18)

कालिन्दीमध्यमायाता सीता त्वेनामवन्दत । स्वस्ति देवि तरामि त्वां पारयेन्मे पतिर्व्रतम् ॥१९॥
यक्ष्ये त्वां गोसहस्रेण सुराघटशतेन च । स्वस्ति प्रत्यागते रामे पुरीमिक्ष्वाकुपालिताम् ॥२०॥
कालिन्दीमथ सीता तु याचमाना कृताञ्जलिः । तीरमेवाभिसम्प्राप्ता दक्षिणं वरवर्णिनी ॥२१॥
ततः प्लवेनांशुमतीं शीघ्रगामूर्मिमालिनीम् । तीरजैर्बहुभिर्वृक्षैः संतेरुर्यमुनां नदीम् ॥२२॥
तेषु ते प्लवमुत्सृज्य प्रस्थाय यमुनावनात् । श्यामं न्यग्रोधमासेदुः शीतलं हरितच्छदम् ॥२३॥
न्यग्रोधं समुपागम्य वैदेही चाभ्यवन्दत । नमस्तेऽस्तु महावृक्ष पारयेन्मे पतिर्व्रतम् ॥२४॥
कौसल्यां चैव पश्येम सुमित्रां च यशस्विनीम् । इति सीताञ्जलिं कृत्वा पर्यगच्छन्मनस्विनी ॥२५॥
अवलोक्य ततः सीतामायाचन्तीमनिन्दिताम् । दयितां च विधेयां च रामो लक्ष्मणमब्रवीत् ॥२६॥
सीतामादाय गच्छ त्वमग्रतो भरतानुज । पृष्ठतोऽनुगमिष्यामि सायुधो द्विपदां वर ॥२७॥
यद् यत् फलं प्रार्थयते पुष्पं वा जनकात्मजा । तत् तत् प्रयच्छ वैदेह्या यत्रास्या रमते मनः ॥२८॥
एकैकं पादपं गुल्मं लतां वा पुष्पशालिनीम् । अदृष्टरूपां पश्यन्ती रामं पप्रच्छ साबला ॥२९॥
रमणीयान् बहुविधान् पादपान् कुसुमोत्करान् । सीतावचनसरब्ध आनयामास लक्ष्मणः ॥३०॥
विचित्रवालुकजलां हंससारसनादिताम् । रेमे जनकराजस्य सुता प्रेक्ष्य तदा नदीम् ॥३१॥
क्रोशमात्रं ततो गत्वा भ्रातरौ रामलक्ष्मणौ । बहून् मेध्यान् मृगान् हत्वा चेरतुर्यमुनावने ॥३२॥
विहृत्य ते बर्हिणपूगनादिते शुभे वने वारणवानरायुते ।
सुमं नदीवप्रमुपेत्य सत्वरं निवासमाजग्मुरदीनदर्शनाः ॥३३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५५ ॥

Arrived in mid stream, Sītā for her part saluted the deity presiding over the stream and prayed to her (as follows):—"May I safely cross your waters (with my husband and brother-in-law), O glorious lady; and let my husband conclude his vow (of spending fourteen years in exile in the forest). (19) When Śrī Rāma safely returns to the city (of Ayodhya) ruled over by the Ikṣwākus, I shall propitiate you by offering a thousand cows and a hundred (and one) articles of worship which cannot be procured even by gods." (20) Even while praying to the river Kālindī (in the aforesaid words) with joined palms, Sītā, for her part, who was possessed of a most excellent complexion, forthwith approached the southern bank (of the Yamuna) itself. (21) Thus they duly crossed by means of a raft the rippling and swift-going Yamuna river, daughter of the sun-god, fringed with numerous trees sprung on its banks. (22) Leaving the raft in the midst of those trees and departing from the forest on the bank of the Yamuna, they reached the cool banyan tree, clothed with green leaves and (accordingly) bearing the name of Śyāma. (23) Nay, going very near the banyan tree, Sītā (a princess of the Videha dynasty) bowed low to it and said, "Hail to you, O gigantic tree! Let my husband conclude his vow (of forest life) and let us see (once more) mother Kausalyā as well as the illustrious Sumitrā." So saying and joining her palms, the high-minded Sitā went round the banyan tree clockwise. (24-25) Seeing his beloved and obedient consort, Sītā, of unimpeachable conduct, offering prayers (to the deity presiding over the banyan tree), Śrī Rāma now said to Lakṣmaṇa, "Taking Sītā (with you) walk you in the van, O Lakṣmaṇa (younger brother of Bharata) ! Equipped with arms I shall follow in the rear, O jewel among men ! (26-27) Offer to Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan) whatever fruit or flower the daughter of Janaka asks for and in which her mind finds delight." (28) Beholding every single tree, shrub or creeper, charming with blossoms, that she had never seen (before), that lady questioned Śrī Rāma about it. (29) Seized with a flurry on hearing Sītā's command, Lakṣmaṇa fetched lovely twigs of various trees, bearing bunches of flowers. (30) The daughter of King Janaka rejoiced to gaze at that time on the river distinguished with charming sands and waters and rendered noisy by swans and cranes. (31) Having walked only a couple of miles from that place and killed many a consecrated deer, the two brothers, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, roamed about in the forest on the bank of the Yamuna. (32) Having diverted themselves in the charming forest, made noisy by flocks of peacocks and infested with monkeys and elephants, and reaching a level ground on the bank of the river, the (princely) travellers, who wore an undepressed look, quickly sought a tree fit for abode. (33)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-five in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

षट्पञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LVI

Moving further next morning and rejoicing on the way to see the loveliness of the forest, the party reaches Chitrakoot and enters the hermitage of Vālmīki. Making up his mind to sojourn there with the permission of the sage, Śrī Rāma gets Lakṣmaṇa to erect a hut of leaves for themselves and, worshipping the deities presiding over the structure, they solemnly enter their abode at a propitious hour.

अथ रात्र्यां व्यतीतायामवसुप्तमनन्तरम् । प्रबोधयामास शनैर्लक्ष्मणं रघुपुंगवः ॥ १ ॥
सौमित्रे शृणु वन्यानां वल्गु व्याहरतां स्वनम् । सम्प्रतिष्ठामहे कालः प्रस्थानस्य परंतप ॥ २ ॥
प्रसुप्तस्तु ततो भ्रात्रा समये प्रतिबोधितः । जहौ निद्रां च तन्द्रां च प्रसक्तं च परिश्रमम् ॥ ३ ॥
तत उत्थाय ते सर्वे स्पृष्ट्वा नद्याः शिवं जलम् । पन्थानमृषिभिर्जुष्टं चित्रकूटस्य तं ययुः ॥ ४ ॥
ततः सम्प्रस्थितः काले रामः सौमित्रिणा सह । सीतां कमलपत्राक्षीमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ ५ ॥

The night having slipped past, Śrī Rāma (a jewel among the Raghus) now gently roused (in the following words) Lakṣmaṇa, who lay asleep for a second time after waking from sleep :—(1) "Hear, O Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), the notes of sweetly warbling wild birds (the parrot, the cuckoo, myna and so on). Let us duly resume our journey as the hour for departure has commenced, O tormentor of enemies! (2) Awakened in time by his (eldest) brother (Śrī Rāma), Lakṣmaṇa, who was fast asleep, for his part, immediately shook off his slumber, drowsiness and fatigue consequent on the (previous day's) journey. (3) Getting up and bathing in the cool waters of the Yamuna, they all then proceeded on the aforesaid path to Chitrakoot, trodden by the seers. (4) Having duly set out with Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) at that time, Śrī Rāma spoke as follows to the lotus-eyed Sītā :—(5)

आदीप्तानिव वैदेहि सर्वतः पुष्पितान् नगान् । स्वैः पुष्पैः किंशुकान् पश्य मालिनः शिशिरात्यये ॥ ६ ॥
पश्य भल्लातकान् बिल्वान् नरैरनुपसेवितान् । फलपुष्पैरवनतान् नूनं शक्ष्याम जीवितुम् ॥ ७ ॥
पश्य द्रोणप्रमाणानि लम्बमानानि लक्ष्मण । मधूनि मधुकारीभिः सम्भृतानि नगे नगे ॥ ८ ॥
एष क्रोशति नत्यूहस्तं शिखी प्रतिकूजति । रमणीये वनोद्देशे पुष्पसंस्तरसंकटे ॥ ९ ॥
मातङ्गयूथानुसृतं पक्षिसंघानुनादितम् । चित्रकूटमिमं पश्य प्रवृद्धशिखरं गिरिम् ॥१०॥
समभूमितले रम्ये द्रुमैर्बहुभिरावृते । पुण्ये रंस्यामहे तात चित्रकूटस्य कानने ॥११॥
ततस्तौ पादचारेण गच्छन्तौ सह सीतया । रम्यमासेदतुः शैलं चित्रकूटं मनोरमम् ॥१२॥
तं तु पर्वतमासाद्य नानापक्षिगणायुतम् । बहुमूलफलं रम्यं सम्पन्नसरसोदकम् ॥१३॥
मनोज्ञोऽयं गिरिः सौम्य नानाद्रुमलतायुतः । बहुमूलफलो रम्यः स्वाजीवः प्रतिभाति मे ॥१४॥
मुनयश्च महात्मानो वसन्त्यस्मिञ्शिलोच्चये । अयं वासो भवेत् तात वयमत्र वसेमहि ॥१५॥

"See, O Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan), the Kiṃśuka (Butea frondosa) trees laden with blossoms on all sides and appearing as though illumined and adorned with garlands (as it were) due to (the rows of) their flowers in this vernal season (synchronizing with the close of winter). (6) Look at the marking-nut and Bel trees, not made use of by men (being out of their reach) and bent low under the weight of their fruit and blossoms. We shall surely be able to live (through). (7) Behold hanging from every tree honeycombs equal in weight to a Droṇa (sixteen seers) and (constructed and) stocked (with honey) by bees, O Lakṣmaṇa! (8) Here is a Chātaka bird crying and a peacock responding to it in a charming part of the forest thick with a scattered mass of flowers. (9) Look at this Chitrakoot hill with elevated peaks, a hill infested with herds of elephants and rendered noisy by flocks of birds. (10) We shall sport, dear brother, in the lovely and holy forest of Chitrakoot consisting of level grounds and covered by many trees." (11) Going on foot with Sītā, the two brothers then reached the delightful and soul-captivating Chitrakoot hill. (12) Reaching that lovely mountain, abounding in flocks of birds of many kinds and having a rich stock of roots and fruits and having sweet water in abundance, Śrī Rāma for his part said to Lakṣmaṇa, "Soul-captivating is this delightful mountain adorned with many trees and creepers and abounds in roots and fruits. To me it appears to be a place where sustenance could be found with ease, O gentle brother! (13-14) High-souled ascetics too dwell on this mountain. It may prove habitable, O dear brother! Let us take up our abode here." (15)

इति सीता च रामश्च लक्ष्मणश्च कृताञ्जलिः । अभिगम्याश्रमं सर्वे वाल्मीकिमभिवादयन् ॥१६॥
तान् महर्षिः प्रमुदितः पूजयामास धर्मवित् । आस्यतामिति चोवाच स्वागतं तं निवेद्य च ॥१७॥
ततोऽब्रवीन्महाबाहुर्लक्ष्मणं लक्ष्मणाग्रजः । संनिवेद्य यथान्यायमात्मानमृषये प्रभुः ॥१८॥
लक्ष्मणानय दारूणि दृढानि च वराणि च । कुरुष्वावसथं सौम्य वासे मेऽभिरतं मनः ॥१९॥
तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा सौमित्रिर्विविधान् द्रुमान् । आजहार ततश्चक्रे पर्णशालामरिंदमः ॥२०॥
तां निष्ठितां बद्धकटां दृष्ट्वा रामः सुदर्शनाम् । शुश्रूषमाणमेकाग्रमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥२१॥

Saying so and entering the hermitage (of Vālmīki), Sītā and Śrī Rāma, and with joined palms Lakṣmaṇa too greeted Sage Vālmīki. (16) Greatly delighted and offering welcome to Śrī Rāma (the principal guest), the eminent sage (Vālmīki), who knew what is right, received them with honour and said, "Be seated !" (17) Duly presenting himself to the seer according to the rules of propriety (obtaining in those days), the powerful Śrī Rāma of mighty arms, the eldest brother of Lakṣmaṇa, then spoke (as follows) to Lakṣmaṇa :—(18) "Fetch, O Lakṣmaṇa, strong and excellent logs of wood and erect a hut, O gentle brother ! My mind is intent on dwelling here." (19) Hearing his aforesaid command, Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) brought boughs of various trees and with them the prince, a subduer of his foes, erected a hut of leaves. (20) Seeing the hut consolidated (with a wall of strong wooden stakes) and thatched and charming to look at, Śrī Rāma spoke as follows to Lakṣmaṇa (who stood listening with rapt attention) :—(21)

ऐणेयं मांसमाहृत्य शालां यक्ष्यामहे वयम् । कर्तव्यं वास्तुशमनं सौमित्रे चिरजीविभिः ॥२२॥
मृगं हत्वाऽऽनय क्षिप्रं लक्ष्मणेह शुभेक्षण । कर्तव्यः शास्त्रदृष्टो हि विधिर्धर्ममनुस्मर ॥२३॥
भ्रातुर्वचनमाज्ञाय लक्ष्मणः परवीरहा । चकार च यथोक्तं हि तं रामः पुनरब्रवीत् ॥२४॥
ऐणेयं श्रपयस्वैतच्छालां यक्ष्यामहे वयम् । त्वर सौम्यमुहूर्तोऽयं ध्रुवश्च दिवसो ह्ययम् ॥२५॥
स लक्ष्मणः कृष्णमृगं हत्वा मेध्यं प्रतापवान् । अथ चिक्षेप सौमित्रिः समिद्धे जातवेदसि ॥२६॥
तत् तु पक्वं समाज्ञाय निष्टप्तं छिन्नशोणितम् । लक्ष्मणः पुरुषव्याघ्रमथ राघवमब्रवीत् ॥२७॥
अयं सर्वः समस्ताङ्गः शृतः कृष्णमृगो मया । देवता देवसंकाश यजस्व कुशलो ह्यसि ॥२८॥

"Fetching the pulp* of the bulb known by the name of Gajakanda we shall propitiate the deity presiding over the hut (roasting the pulp and offering it as an oblation to the deity). The rite of appeasing the (evil) spirit haunting a newly-erected structure must be gone through by those wishing to live long. (22) Digging out the bulb† known by the name of Gajakanda, bring it here at once, O fair-eyed Lakṣmaṇa; for the procedure laid down in the scriptures must be observed. (Always) mind your sacred obligations." (23) Clearly perceiving the command of his (eldest) brother, the aforesaid Lakṣmaṇa, the destroyer of hostile warriors, actually did as he was told and Śrī Rāma said to him again, "Dress this bulb, we shall propitiate the deities (the fire-god, Parjanya and so on, numbering fifty) presiding over the hut (by offering the dressed bulb to them). Look sharp ! The current is a propitious hour and this day too bears the name of 'Dhruva'[*] (undying)." (24-25) Unearthing the bulb, which has a black peel and is fit for being offered as an oblation to gods, the aforesaid Lakṣmaṇa, son of Sumitrā, full of glory as he was, forthwith cast it into a blazing fire. (26) Having definitely come to know that its pulp had been fully roasted and dressed and divested of its ruddy colour, Lakṣmaṇa now submitted (as follows) to Śrī Rāma, a tiger among men:—(27) "This bulb, known by the name of Gajakanda and endowed with a black peel, and by which all [†] disordered limbs are put right, has been fully dressed by me. (Pray) propitiate the gods (presiding over the hut by offering it as an oblation to them), inasmuch as you are well-versed in the rite, O brother vying with gods (in glory) !" (28)

---

* The words 'ऐणेयं मांसम्' in the above verse has been purposely taken to mean the pulp of the bulb known by the name of Gajakanda; for if the words are interpreted otherwise in the sense of the meat of a deer, such an interpretation would expose Śrī Rāma to self-contradiction inasmuch as he has already signified his intention in the presence of his own beloved mother "to live on bulbs, roots and fruits (alone) during the period of his exile in the forest, forswearing meat like ascetics" (II. xx. 29), reiterated this intention to live on fruits and roots to his father in II. xxxiv. 59 and repeated the thing once more to Sage Bharadwāja in II. liv. 16. And since it has been said by the poet himself in praise of Śrī Rāma elsewhere that he never altered his statement (रामो द्विर्नाभिभाषते) and firmly adhered to his utterances, he could not even be conceived to have gone back upon his word.

† The *Madanapāla-Nighaṇṭu* treats the word 'मृग' as an equivalent of the bulb named Gajakanda.

रामः स्नात्वा तु नियतो गुणवाञ्जपकोविदः । संग्रहेणाकरोत् सर्वान् मन्त्रान् सत्रावसानिकान् ॥२९॥
दृष्ट्वा देवगणान् सर्वान् विवेशावसथं शुचिः । बभूव च मनोह्लादो रामस्यामिततेजसः ॥३०॥
वैश्वदेवबलिं कृत्वा रौद्रं वैष्णवमेव च । वास्तुसंशमनीयानि मङ्गलानि प्रवर्तयन् ॥३१॥
जपं च न्यायतः कृत्वा स्नात्वा नद्यां यथाविधि । पापसंशमनं रामश्चकार बलिमुत्तमम् ॥३२॥
वेदिस्थलविधानानि चैत्यान्यायतनानि च । आश्रमस्यानुरूपाणि स्थापयामास राघवः ॥३३॥
तां वृक्षपर्णच्छदनां मनोज्ञां यथाप्रदेशं सुकृतां निवाताम् ।
वासाय सर्वे विविशुः समेताः सभां यथा देवगणाः सुधर्माम् ॥३४॥
सुरम्यमासाद्य तु चित्रकूटं नदीं च तां माल्यवतीं सुतीर्थाम् ।
ननन्द हृष्टो मृगपक्षिजुष्टां जहौ च दुःखं पुरविप्रवासात् ॥३५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षट्पञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५६ ॥

Having finished his bath and fully disciplined as he was, Śrī Rāma, for his part, who was full of virtues and well-versed in the sacred texts to be muttered on the occasion, went through in brief the ceremony of Vāstu-Śānti, reciting the sacred texts bearing on the conclusion of a sacrificial performance. (29) Having propitiated all the hosts of gods presiding over the (newly-erected) hut and (thus) purified, Śrī Rāma entered the hut. Nay, (great) satisfaction of mind was caused (thereby) to Śrī Rāma, who was possessed of immense glory. (30) Having bathed in the river (Mandākinī) according to the procedure laid down in the scriptures and muttered sacred texts (such as the Gāyatrī) in the right way, and intending as he did to perform solemn rites calculated to ward off the evils attendant on a new construction, Śrī Rāma offered excellent oblations to Lord Rudra and Lord Viṣṇu too after performing the Vaiśwadeva (a religious ceremony which ought to be performed every morning and evening and especially before the midday meal and consists in homage paid to the Viśwedevas followed by Baliharaṇa or offering of small portions of cooked food to the gods who give the food and especially to the god of fire, who cooks the food for us and bears the offering to heaven). (31-32) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) erected and consecrated altars of a size proportionate to the hut for offering oblations to the eight guardians of the quarters and the intermediate points and Chaityas (places of worship for Gaṇeśa and other gods) and Āyatanas (places for worship for Lord Viṣṇu and others). (33) (Even) as multitudes of gods entered their assembly hall named Sudharmā (in heaven), all (the three princely exiles) entered together for habitation the aforesaid soul-captivating hut, thatched with the leaves of trees, erected well on a suitable site and sheltered from winds. (34) Rejoiced to reach the exceedingly delightful Chitrakoot and the celebrated river, Mālyavatī (Mandākinī), which was provided with good descents and was sought by beasts and birds, Śrī Rāma for his part rejoiced and shed the agony caused by his exile from the city (of Ayodhya). (35)

---

[*] According to the popular astrological work 'Muhūrta-Chintāmaṇi' the three lunar mansions bearing the part name of Uttarā, *viz.*, Uttarā Phālgunī, Uttarāṣāḍhā and Uttarā Bhādrapadā, and Rohiṇī, as well as Sunday are spoken of as 'Dhruva' and 'Sthita'. They are looked upon as auspicious for Graha-Śānti, Vāstu-Śānti etc.

[†] The compound word 'समस्ताङ्गः' should be split up as 'सम्यग भवन्ति अस्तानि अङ्गानि येन सः' ।

Thus ends Canto Fifty-six in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LVII

Having been told of Śrī Rāma's departure for Chitrakoot by the spies of Guha and taking leave of the latter, Sumantra drives back to Ayodhya. Entering the royal gynaeceum, he submits to the emperor what he reported earlier to the citizens who followed his chariot. Daśaratha and Kausalyā fall into a swoon to hear about Śrī Rāma's departure for Chitrakoot, and all the inmates of the gynaeceum burst into a wail from agony.

कथयित्वा तु दुःखार्तः सुमन्त्रेण चिरं सह । रामे दक्षिणकूलस्थे जगाम स्वगृहं गुहः ॥ १ ॥
भरद्वाजाभिगमनं प्रयागे च सभाजनम् । आ गिरेर्गमनं तेषां तत्रस्थैरभिलक्षितम् ॥ २ ॥
अनुज्ञातः सुमन्त्रोऽथ योजयित्वा हयोत्तमाम् । अयोध्यामेव नगरीं प्रययौ गाढदुर्मनाः ॥ ३ ॥
स वनानि सुगन्धीनि सरितश्च सरांसि च । पश्यन् यत्तो ययौ शीघ्रं ग्रामाणि नगराणि च ॥ ४ ॥
ततः सायाह्नसमये द्वितीयेऽहनि सारथिः । अयोध्यां समनुप्राप्य निरानन्दां ददर्श ह ॥ ५ ॥
स शून्यामिव निःशब्दां दृष्ट्वा परमदुर्मनाः । सुमन्त्रश्चिन्तयामास शोकवेगसमाहतः ॥ ६ ॥
कच्चिन्न सगजा साश्वा सजना सजनाधिपा । रामसंतापदुःखेन दग्धा शोकाग्निना पुरी ॥ ७ ॥

Having talked long with Sumantra (on the virtues of Śrī Rāma), Guha for his part, stricken as he was with agony (due to separation from Śrī Rāma), left for his home when Śrī Rāma set his foot on the southern bank of the Ganga. (1)

The meeting (of Śrī Rāma and others) with Bharadwāja at Prayag and their reception (by the latter) as well as their journey up to the Chitrakoot hill was witnessed by the spies (of Guha) at Sringaverpur (and reported to Sumantra). (2) Therefore, yoking the excellent horses to his chariot, when granted leave (by Guha), Sumantra drove straight to Ayodhya, deeply disconsolate at heart. (3) Viewing woodlands diffusing sweet odours, rivers and lakes, villages and cities, the charioteer carefully drove along at a quick speed. (4) Duly reaching Ayodhya at dusk on the second day (since his departure from Sringaverpur), the charioteer found it cheerless: so it is said. (5) Greatly troubled in mind to see Ayodhya noiseless as though desolate, and overpowered with the vehemence of grief, Sumantra reflected :—(6) "I hope the city (of Ayodhya) with its elephants, horses, people and sovereign has not been consumed by the fire of grief caused by the agony of separation from Śrī Rāma." (7)

इति चिन्तापरः सूतो वाजिभिः शीघ्रयायिभिः । नगरद्वारमासाद्य त्वरितः प्रविवेश ह ॥८॥
सुमन्त्रमभियान्तं तं शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः । क्व राम इति पृच्छन्तः सूतमभ्यद्रवन् नराः ॥९॥
तेषां शशंस गङ्गायामहमापृच्छ्य राघवम् । अनुज्ञातो निवृत्तोऽस्मि धार्मिकेण महात्मना ॥१०॥
ते तीर्णा इति विज्ञाय बाष्पपूर्णमुखा नराः । अहो धिगिति निःश्वस्य हा रामेति विचुक्रुशुः ॥११॥
शुश्राव च वचस्तेषां वृन्दं वृन्दं च तिष्ठताम् । हताः स्म खलु ये नेह पश्याम इति राघवम् ॥१२॥
दानयज्ञविवाहेषु समाजेषु महत्सु च । न द्रक्ष्यामः पुनर्जातु धार्मिकं राममन्तरा ॥१३॥
किं समर्थं जनस्यास्य किं प्रियं किं सुखावहम् । इति रामेण नगरं पित्रेव परिपालितम् ॥१४॥

Reaching the city gate by the chariot driven by swift-going horses, while pondering thus, the charioteer they say hastily entered the city. (8) Inquiring where Śrī Rāma was, people forthwith rushed in their hundreds and thousands towards Sumantra, who was driving in the direction of the palace. (9) He replied to them, "Taking leave of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), when sent back by that pious and lofty-minded prince, on the bank of the Ganga (at Sringaverpur), I have returned (from that place)." (10) Coming to know for certain that the exiles had crossed the Ganga, and sighing with the words "Oh, fie upon us !" people with their faces bathed in tears cried aloud, "Ah Rāma !" (11) Nay, he heard the lament of the people, who stood in batches saying, "Doomed indeed are we, who do not perceive Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) in this chariot ! (12) (Alas) we shall never see the pious Śrī Rāma in our midst again on the occasions of bestowing gifts, sacrificial performances and weddings nor in large gatherings. (13) The citizens of Ayodhya were looked after by Śrī Rāma as by a father with due regard to what was conducive to one's good, what was agreeable to an individual and what brought happiness to one." (14)

वातायनगतानां च स्त्रीणामन्वन्तरापणम् । राममेवाभितप्तानां शुश्राव परिदेवनाम् ॥१५॥
स राजमार्गमध्येन सुमन्त्रः पिहिताननः । यत्र राजा दशरथस्तदेवोपययौ गृहम् ॥१६॥
सोऽवतीर्य रथाच्छीघ्रं राजवेश्म प्रविश्य च । कक्ष्याः सप्ताभिचक्राम महाजनसमाकुलाः ॥१७॥
हर्म्यैर्विमानैः प्रासादैरवेक्ष्याथ समागतम् । हाहाकारकृता नार्यो रामादर्शनकर्शिताः ॥१८॥
आयतैर्विमलैर्नेत्रैरश्रुवेगपरिप्लुतैः । अन्योन्यमभिवीक्षन्तेऽव्यक्तमार्ततराः स्त्रियः ॥१९॥
ततो दशरथस्त्रीणां प्रासादेभ्यस्ततस्ततः । रामशोकाभितप्तानां मन्दं शुश्राव जल्पितम् ॥२०॥

सह रामेण निर्यातो विना राममिहागतः । सूतः किं नाम कौसल्यां क्रोशन्तीं प्रतिवक्ष्यति ॥२१॥
यथा च मन्ये दुर्जीवमेवं न सुकरं ध्रुवम् । आच्छिद्य पुत्रे निर्याते कौसल्या यत्र जीवति ॥२२॥

Driving through the bazaars, Sumantra heard the wailing of women standing at the windows (of their houses) and feeling distressed on account of Śrī Rāma's exile. (15) His face covered (with cloth), the said Sumantra headed through the middle of the king's highway towards the palace where King Daśaratha was. (16) Quickly alighting from the chariot and entering the royal palace, he crossed the seven portals thronged with large crowds of men. (17) Finding from their mansions, seven-storied buildings and palaces that Sumantra had duly returned (from the forest without Śrī Rāma), ladies, who had been emaciated because of their not being able to see Śrī Rāma (all these days), burst into a loud wail. (18) Deeply distressed, the ladies gazed on one another vacantly with their big eyes flooded with an upsurge of tears and (therefore) rid of their collyrium. (19) Then he heard the talk in low tones of the consorts of Emperor Daśaratha,—who were stricken with grief caused by separation from Śrī Rāma,—from their palaces here and there. (20) (They said to one another):—"What reply will the charioteer (Sumantra), who departed (from Ayodhya) with Rāma and has returned to the capital without Rāma, give to the screaming Kausalyā (when questioned by her)? (21) Since Kausalyā continues to survive even though her son (Rāma) has left (Ayodhya) relinquishing the throne, I (am led to) believe that surely it is not so easy to end one's life as it is hard to preserve life (against odds)." (22)

सत्यरूपं तु तद् वाक्यं राजस्त्रीणां निशामयन् । प्रदीप्त इव शोकेन विवेश सहसा गृहम् ॥२३॥
स प्रविश्याष्टमीं कक्ष्यां राजानं दीनमातुरम् । पुत्रशोकपरिद्यूनमपश्यत् पाण्डुरे गृहे ॥२४॥
अभिगम्य तमासीनं राजानमभिवाद्य च । सुमन्त्रो रामवचनं यथोक्तं प्रत्यवेदयत् ॥२५॥
स तूष्णीमेव तच्छ्रुत्वा राजा विद्रुतमानसः । मूर्च्छितो न्यपतद् भूमौ रामशोकाभिपीडितः ॥२६॥
ततोऽन्तःपुरमाविद्धं मूर्च्छिते पृथिवीपतौ । उच्छ्रित्य बाहू चुक्रोश नृपतौ पतिते क्षितौ ॥२७॥
सुमित्रया तु सहिता कौसल्या पतितं पतिम् । उत्थापयामास तदा वचनं चेदमब्रवीत् ॥२८॥

Hearing the aforesaid truthful assertion of the king's consorts, Sumantra for his part entered the palace all at once as though he were set ablaze with grief. (23) Entering the eighth gateway, he beheld in the white chamber the afflicted and over-anxious monarch withered through grief for his son. (24) Approaching the aforesaid king, who was seated, and greeting him, Sumantra delivered (to him) the message of Śrī Rāma as instructed (by the latter). (25) Hearing that message in perfect silence, the aforesaid monarch felt perplexed in mind and dropped unconscious to the ground, tormented as he was with grief caused by separation from Śrī Rāma. (26) The emperor having fainted, the (entire) gynaeceum now felt sore distressed. (And) when the king fell to the ground, the inmates of the gynaeceum burst into a wail raising their arms. (27) Assisted by Sumitrā, Kausalyā for her part lifted up her fallen husband on that occasion and submitted as follows:—(28)

इमं तस्य महाभाग दूतं दुष्करकारिणः । वनवासादनुप्राप्तं कस्मान्न प्रतिभाषसे ॥२९॥
अद्येममनयं कृत्वा व्यपत्रपसि राघव । उत्तिष्ठ सुकृतं तेऽस्तु शोके न स्यात् सहायता ॥३०॥
देव यस्या भयाद् रामं नानुपृच्छसि सारथिम् । नेह तिष्ठति कैकेयी विस्रब्धं प्रतिभाष्यताम् ॥३१॥

सा तथोक्त्वा महाराजं कौसल्या शोकलालसा । धरण्यां निपपाताशु बाष्पविप्लुतभाषिणी ॥३२॥
विलपन्तीं तथा दृष्ट्वा कौसल्यां पतितां भुवि । पतिं चावेक्ष्य ताः सर्वाः समन्ताद् रुरुदुः स्त्रियः ॥३३॥
ततस्तमन्तःपुरनादमुत्थितं समीक्ष्य वृद्धास्तरुणाश्च मानवाः ।
स्त्रियश्च सर्वा रुरुदुः समन्ततः पुरं तदासीत् पुनरेव संकुलम् ॥३४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्तपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५७ ॥

"Wherefore, O highly blessed king, do you not make answer to the messenger of Rāma,—who has accomplished a difficult task,—returned from his (recent) trip to the forest ? (29) Having perpetrated this unseemly act (in the shape of banishing your eldest and worthiest son), do you feel abashed today, O scion of Raghu ? (Kindly) get up ! Let your virtue (resulting from your devotion to truth) abide. In the event of your giving way to grief, your associates (too) may cease to be. (30) Kaikeyī, for fear of whom you do not address inquiries concerning Rāma to the charioteer (Sumantra), O lord, is not present here. (Therefore) reply may be given (to Sumantra) with confidence." (31) Having submitted to the emperor as aforesaid, the celebrated Kausalyā, who was wholly given up to grief, and was faltering through tears, forthwith dropped to the ground. (32) Seeing Kausalyā fallen to the ground wailing as aforesaid, and gazing on their husband (lying senseless), all those ladies around her wept. (33) Perceiving that (plaintive) cry raised in the gynaeceum, men, (both) aged and young, and all women flocked around weeping and the city of Ayodhya was agitated once more. (34)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-seven in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टपञ्चाशः सर्गः

Canto LVIII

Bewailing the lot of Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, who did not in any way deserve the hardships they were undergoing in the forest, the emperor urges Sumantra to deliver their parting message and the charioteer proceeds to tell him what they said.

प्रत्याश्वस्तो यदा राजा मोहात् प्रत्यागतस्मृतिः । तदाऽऽजुहाव तं सूतं रामवृत्तान्तकारणात् ॥ १ ॥
तदा सूतो महाराजं कृताञ्जलिरुपस्थितः । राममेवानुशोचन्तं दुःखशोकसमन्वितम् ॥ २ ॥
वृद्धं परमसंतप्तं नवग्रहमिव द्विपम् । विनिःश्वसन्तं ध्यायन्तमस्वस्थमिव कुञ्जरम् ॥ ३ ॥
राजा तु रजसा सूतं ध्वस्ताङ्गं समुपस्थितम् । अश्रुपूर्णमुखं दीनमुवाच परमार्तवत् ॥ ४ ॥

When the king woke from his swoon, consciousness having returned (to him) he confidently summoned (to his presence) the charioteer (Sumantra) in order to hear the news about Śrī Rāma. (1) With joined palms the charioteer then sought the presence of the aged emperor, who was dolefully sighing, seized as he was with agony and grief and, feeling sore distressed and ill at ease, was mourning for Śrī Rāma alone and (thus) resembled a newly-captured elephant hissing and remembering the leader of its herd. (2-3) Like one sore afflicted, the king for his part said to the charioteer, who stood respectfully, wearing a wretched look, his limbs stained with dust and his face bathed in tears:—(4)

क्व नु वत्स्यति धर्मात्मा वृक्षमूलमुपाश्रितः । सोऽत्यन्तसुखितः सूत किमशिष्यति राघवः ॥ ५ ॥
दुःखस्यानुचितो दुःखं सुमन्त्र शयनोचितः । भूमिपालात्मजो भूमौ शेते कथमनाथवत् ॥ ६ ॥
यं यान्तमनुयान्ति स्म पदातिरथकुञ्जराः । स वत्स्यति कथं रामो विजनं वनमाश्रितः ॥ ७ ॥
व्यालैर्मृगैराचरितं कृष्णसर्पनिषेवितम् । कथं कुमारौ वैदेह्या सार्धं वनमुपाश्रितौ ॥ ८ ॥
सुकुमार्या तपस्विन्या सुमन्त्र सह सीतया । राजपुत्रौ कथं पादैरवरुह्य रथाद् गतौ ॥ ९ ॥
सिद्धार्थः खलु सूत त्वं येन दृष्टौ ममात्मजौ । वनान्तं प्रविशन्तौ तावश्विनाविव मन्दरम् ॥१०॥
किमुवाच वचो रामः किमुवाच च लक्ष्मणः । सुमन्त्र वनमासाद्य किमुवाच च मैथिली ॥११॥
आसितं शयितं भुक्तं सूत रामस्य कीर्तय । जीविष्याम्यहमेतेन ययातिरिव साधुषु ॥१२॥

"Where will Rāma (a scion of Raghu), whose mind is given to piety, live taking shelter under a tree? What, O charioteer, will he eat, having lived most comfortably (all these years)? (5) How, O Sumantra, does the prince, who is undeserving of suffering and is worthy of reposing on a (costly) bed, lie down miserably on the ground like one forlorn? (6) How will Rāma, whom foot-soldiers, chariots and elephants used to follow whenever he went out (of his palace), live confined to a lonely forest? (7) How have the two princes taken up their abode with Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan) in a forest frequented by carnivorous animals and deer and infested with cobras? (8) How did the two princes (Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) with Sītā of delicate frame and engaged in austerities proceed on foot, getting down from the chariot, O Sumantra? (9) Accomplished of purpose indeed are you, O charioteer, by whom my aforesaid two sons (Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) have been seen entering deep into the forest region as the Aświns (the twin-born physicians of gods) enter the precincts of Mount Mandara (a mountain frequented by gods). (10) Having reached the forest, O Sumantra, what words did Rāma utter and what did Lakṣmaṇa say? And what did Sītā (daughter of the king of Mithilā) say? (11) (Pray) speak (to me) about (the mode of) Rāma's sitting, lying down to sleep and eating, O charioteer! I shall survive on the strength of this information (even) as King Yayāti (when hurled down from heaven on his stock of merits having been exhausted through self-praise) lived (happily) in the midst of pious souls.*" (12)

इति सूतो नरेन्द्रेण चोदितः सज्जमानया । उवाच वाचा राजानं स बाष्पपरिबद्धया ॥१३॥
अब्रवीन्मे महाराज धर्ममेवानुपालयन् । अञ्जलिं राघवः कृत्वा शिरसाभिप्रणम्य च ॥१४॥
सूत मद्वचनात् तस्य तातस्य विदितात्मनः । शिरसा वन्दनीयस्य वन्द्यौ पादौ महात्मनः ॥१५॥
सर्वमन्तःपुरं वाच्यं सूत मद्वचनात् त्वया । आरोग्यमविशेषेण यथार्हमभिवादनम् ॥१६॥

---

* We read in the Mahābhārata, Ādiparva, how when doomed to fall from heaven, King Yayāti requested Indra to cast his lot with saints. He was accordingly sent down to a spot on the earth, where four ascetics—Aṣṭaka, Pratardana, Vasumān and King Śibi had been practising austerities, and had a discourse with them (Discourses LXXXVIII to XCIII).

माता च मम कौसल्या कुशलं चाभिवादनम् । अप्रमादं च वक्तव्या ब्रूयाश्चैनामिदं वचः ॥१७॥
धर्मनित्या यथाकालमग्न्यगारपरा भव । देवि देवस्य पादौ च देववत् परिपालय ॥१८॥
अभिमानं च मानं च त्यक्त्वा वर्तस्व मातृषु । अनुराजानमार्यां च कैकेयीमम्ब कारय ॥१९॥
कुमारे भरते वृत्तिर्वर्तितव्या च राजवत् । अप्यज्येष्ठा हि राजानो राजधर्ममनुस्मर ॥२०॥

Urged thus by the emperor, the said charioteer replied to the king in a faltering voice choked with tears (as follows):—(13) "Joining his palms and offering respectful greetings with bent head and (thus) strictly following the prescribed course of conduct, O great king, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) said to me, 'The feet of that high-souled father (of mine), who has realized the Self and deserves to be greeted with bent head, should be saluted in my name, O charioteer! (14-15) The whole gynaeceum, O charioteer, should be asked without distinction on my behalf of their welfare by you and should be offered greetings in order of their rank (seniority). (16) And my mother, Kausalyā, should be told of my welfare and offered greetings (on my behalf) and assured of my punctiliousness (with regard to my sacred obligations). Again the following message should be delivered to her:—(17) 'Remain constantly devoted to righteousness and attend the fire-sanctuary at the proper time (the time of fire-worship). And tend, O godly lady, the feet of your spouse as those of a deity. (18) Shaking off pride (of descent) and self-esteem (born of seniority), treat my (other) mothers on an equal footing. And, O mother, treat Kaikeyī, to whom the king is (so) devoted, as superior (to you) (19) Treatment should be accorded to Prince Bharata as to His Majesty. Even though junior (in age) kings deserve to be honoured. (Pray) bear in mind your duty towards a king. (20)

भरतः कुशलं वाच्यो वाच्यो मद्वचनेन च । सर्वास्वेव यथान्यायं वृत्तिं वर्तस्व मातृषु ॥२१॥
वक्तव्यश्च महाबाहुरिक्ष्वाकुकुलनन्दनः । पितरं यौवराज्यस्थो राज्यस्थमनुपालय ॥२२॥
अतिक्रान्तवया राजा मा स्मैनं व्यपरोरुधः । कुमारराज्ये जीवस्व तस्यैवाज्ञाप्रवर्तनात् ॥२३॥
अब्रवीच्चापि मां भूयो भृशमश्रूणि वर्तयन् । मातेव मम माता ते द्रष्टव्या पुत्रगर्धिनी ॥२४॥
इत्येवं मां महाबाहुर्ब्रुवन्नेव महायशाः । रामो राजीवपत्राक्षो भृशमश्रूण्यवर्तयत् ॥२५॥

"Bharata (too) should be told of my welfare and admonished (in the following words) on my behalf:—'(Pray) behave justly towards all your mothers. (21) The mighty-armed Bharata (the delight of Ikṣwāku's race) should be further exhorted (as follows):—(Even) when installed in the office of Prince Regent (please) serve your father, who (still) occupies the throne (of Ayodhya). (22) The king has gone beyond the age of rulership: do not dethrone him (on this score). (Therefore) by keeping up his authority alone maintain yourself by the office of Prince Regent.' (23) Nay, shedding tears again and again, Śrī Rāma further asked me to tell Bharata:—'My mother (Kausalyā), who is excessively fond of myself (her son), should be looked upon as your (own) mother.' (24) Even while instructing me as aforesaid, the mighty-armed and highly illustrious Śrī Rāma, who has eyes resembling the petals of a lotus, shed tears again and again. (25)

लक्ष्मणस्तु सुसंक्रुद्धो निःश्वसन् वाक्यमब्रवीत् । केनायमपराधेन राजपुत्रो विवासितः ॥२६॥
राजा तु खलु कैकेय्या लघु चाश्रुत्य शासनम् । कृतं कार्यमकार्यं वा वयं येनाभिपीडिताः ॥२७॥

यदि प्रव्राजितो रामो लोभकारणकारितम् । वरदाननिमित्तं वा सर्वथा दुष्कृतं कृतम् ॥२८॥
इदं तावद् यथाकाममीश्वरस्य कृते कृतम् । रामस्य तु परित्यागे न हेतुमुपलक्षये ॥२९॥
असमीक्ष्य समारब्धं विरुद्धं बुद्धिलाघवात् । जनयिष्यति संक्रोशं राघवस्य विवासनम् ॥३०॥
अहं तावन्महाराजे पितृत्वं नोपलक्षये । भ्राता भर्ता च बन्धुश्च पिता च मम राघवः ॥३१॥
सर्वलोकप्रियं त्यक्त्वा सर्वलोकहिते रते । सर्वलोकोऽनुरज्येत कथं चानेन कर्मणा ॥३२॥
सर्वप्रजाभिरामं हि रामं प्रव्राज्य धार्मिकम् । सर्वलोकविरोधेन कथं राजा भविष्यति ॥३३॥

"Highly enraged, Lakṣmaṇa for his part spoke hissing as follows:—'For what offence has this prince (Śrī Rāma) been exiled ? (26) Having quickly promised to carry out the command of Kaikeyī, the king executed it, not minding whether it was worth doing or not, as a result of which we have been subjected to excessive suffering. (27) If the event of Śrī Rāma having been exiled was brought about through greed (for power) or because a boon had been granted to that effect (by the emperor), a wholly undesirable act has been done. (28) Whether this was done according to the king's pleasure or through the will of Providence, I do not find any justification whatsoever for Śrī Rāma's exile. (29) The exile of Śrī Rāma, which has been brought about contrary to usage without proper consideration due to shortsight, will lead to remorse. (30) I at any rate perceive no parenthood in the emperor, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) is my (elder) brother, master, kinsman and father too. (31) How can the entire populace be pleased through this act with the king, who is devoted to the good of all people having forsaken Śrī Rāma (the beloved of all people) ? (32) Having actually exiled the pious Śrī Rāma, the delighter of all the people, in opposition to the will of all people, how can father continue to be the king ?' (33)

जानकी तु महाराज निःश्वसन्ती तपस्विनी । भूतोपहतचित्तेव विष्ठिता विस्मृता स्थिता ॥३४॥
अदृष्टपूर्वव्यसना राजपुत्री यशस्विनी । तेन दुःखेन रुदती नैव मां किंचिदब्रवीत् ॥३५॥
उद्वीक्षमाणा भर्तारं मुखेन परिशुष्यता । मुमोच सहसा बाष्पं प्रयान्तमुपवीक्ष्य सा ॥३६॥
तथैव रामोऽश्रुमुखः कृताञ्जलिः स्थितोऽब्रवील्लक्ष्मणबाहुपालितः ।
तथैव सीता रुदती तपस्विनी निरीक्षते राजरथं तथैव माम् ॥३७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टपञ्चाशः सर्गः ॥ ५८ ॥

"Sītā (daughter of Janaka), for her part, who is engaged in austerities, stood sighing and motionless, oblivious of everything as though her mind was possessed by a spirit, O emperor ! (34) Having never seen adversity before, the illustrious princess did not speak anything at all to me, weeping as she did due to the distress of her husband. (35) Seeing me about to depart (for Ayodhya), she suddenly broke into tears as she stood looking at her husband with a withering face. (36) Precisely as aforesaid spoke Śrī Rāma, protected by the arms of Lakṣmaṇa, and standing with joined palms, his face covered with tears. And so did Sītā, engaged in austerities, gaze weeping on the royal chariot (driven by me) as well as on me." (37)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-eight in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Valmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकोनषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LIX

To satisfy the emperor's curiosity Sumantra tells him further of Śrī Rāma's departure for the forest, and also apprises him of the pitiable condition of the animate as well as of the inanimate creation in his realm as also of his capital consequent on Śrī Rāma's exile. Hearing of the woeful tale, Daśaratha raves like a madman in many ways in the presence of the charioteer-minister.

मम त्वश्वा निवृत्तस्य न प्रावर्तन्त वर्त्मनि । उष्णमश्रु विमुञ्चन्तो रामे सम्प्रस्थिते वनम् ॥ १ ॥
उभाभ्यां राजपुत्राभ्यामथ कृत्वाहमञ्जलिम् । प्रस्थितो रथमास्थाय तद् दुःखमपि धारयन् ॥ २ ॥
गुहेन सार्धं तत्रैव स्थितोऽस्मि दिवसान् बहून् । आशया यदि मां रामः पुनः शब्दापयेदिति ॥ ३ ॥
विषये ते महाराज महाव्यसनकर्शिताः । अपि वृक्षाः परिम्लानाः सपुष्पाङ्कुरकोरकाः ॥ ४ ॥
उपतप्तोदका नद्यः पल्वलानि सरांसि च । परिशुष्कपलाशानि वनान्युपवनानि च ॥ ५ ॥
न च सर्पन्ति सत्त्वानि व्याला न प्रचरन्ति च । रामशोकाभिभूतं तन्निष्कूजमिव तद् वनम् ॥ ६ ॥
लीनपुष्करपत्राश्च नद्यश्च कलुषोदकाः । संतप्तपद्माः पद्मिन्यो लीनमीनविहंगमाः ॥ ७ ॥
जलजानि च पुष्पाणि माल्यानि स्थलजानि च । नातिभान्त्यल्पगन्धीनि फलानि च यथापुरम् ॥ ८ ॥
अत्रोद्यानानि शून्यानि प्रलीनविहगानि च । न चाभिरामानारामान् पश्यामि मनुजर्षभ ॥ ९ ॥

"Offering salutation with joined palms to both the princes on Śrī Rāma having duly departed for the forest, and mounting the chariot, I too forthwith made ready to depart (for Ayodhya), restraining that (unbearable) agony (of separation from Śrī Rāma). My horses, however, (even) as I turned my back (on Śrī Rāma) did not proceed on their journey (to Ayodhya) and stood shedding tears of grief. (1-2) I remained with Guha (the chieftain of Sringaverpur) at his own place for many (three) days in the hope that Śrī Rāma might probably call me again (through foresters). (3) Withered through intense suffering, O great monarch, even trees in your kingdom with their flowers, shoots and buds have been blasted. (4) The water of the rivers as well as of ponds and lakes has got dried up. (Nay) the leaves in the wood and groves have got withered. (5) Living beings (in the forest) do not move about nor do reptiles crawl (even in search of food), the (entire), living creation being overwhelmed with grief born of separation from Śrī Rāma. (Nay) the forest on the way is noiseless (too) as it were (though full of birds). (6) The water of the rivers, again, has become turbid and the leaves of the lotuses in them have fallen down. The lotuses in the ponds have got dried up and the fishes and water-fowls in them have perished. (7) Nay, giving forth very little fragrance, aquatic flowers and those growing on land do not look very charming and fruits (too) are not so luscious as before. (8) Desolate are the gardens in the city and the birds in them have disappeared. Nor do I find the parks (so) pleasing, O jewel among men ! (9)

प्रविशन्तमयोध्यायां न कश्चिदभिनन्दति । नरा राममपश्यन्तो निःश्वसन्ति मुहुर्मुहुः ॥१०॥
देव राजरथं दृष्ट्वा विना राममिहागतम् । दूरादश्रुमुखः सर्वो राजमार्गे गतो जनः ॥११॥
हर्म्यैर्विमानैः प्रासादैरवेक्ष्य रथमागतम् । हाहाकारकृता नार्यो रामादर्शनकर्शिताः ॥१२॥
आयतैर्विमलैर्नेत्रैरश्रुवेगपरिप्लुतैः । अन्योन्यमभिवीक्षन्तेऽव्यक्तमार्ततराः स्त्रियः ॥१३॥
नामित्राणां न मित्राणामुदासीनजनस्य च । अहमार्ततया कंचिद् विशेषं नोपलक्षये ॥१४॥
अप्रहृष्टमनुष्या च दीननागतुरंगमा । आर्तस्वरपरिम्लाना विनिःश्वसितनिःस्वना ॥१५॥
निरानन्दा महाराज रामप्रव्राजनातुरा । कौसल्या पुत्रहीनेव अयोध्या प्रतिभाति मे ॥१६॥

"None greeted me as I entered Ayodhya. Not perceiving Śrī Rāma, men sighed again and again. (10) Seeing from a distance the royal chariot arrived in Ayodhya without Śrī Rāma, O lord, all the people present on the main road had their faces covered with tears. (11) Perceiving from their mansions, seven-storeyed buildings and palaces the chariot returned (from the forest), the ladies, who were feeling distressed due to their not being able to see Śrī Rāma, broke into lamentation. (12) The ladies, who were sore afflicted (due to the exile of Śrī Rāma) mutely gazed on one another with their large eyes flooded with an upsurge of tears, their collyrium washed (thereby). (13) I do not perceive any difference in point of affliction between his enemies, friends and neutrals. (14) With its cheerless men and women and wretched elephants and horses, (nay) looking blasted through plaintive cries and full of noise in the shape of sighs, O great monarch, Ayodhya appears to me joyless and distressed through the banishment of Śrī Rāma, like Empress Kausalyā, bereft of her son." (15-16)

सूतस्य वचनं श्रुत्वा वाचा परमदीनया । बाष्पोपहतया सूतमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१७॥
कैकेय्या विनियुक्तेन पापाभिजनभावया । मया न मन्त्रकुशलैर्वृद्धैः सह समर्थितम् ॥१८॥
न सुहृद्भिर्न चामात्यैर्मन्त्रयित्वा सनैगमैः । मयायमर्थः सम्मोहात् स्त्रीहेतोः सहसा कृतः ॥१९॥
भवितव्यतया नूनमिदं वा व्यसनं महत् । कुलस्यास्य विनाशाय प्राप्तं सूत यदृच्छया ॥२०॥
सूत यद्यस्ति ते किंचिन्मयापि सुकृतं कृतम् । त्वं प्रापयाशु मां रामं प्राणाः संत्वरयन्ति माम् ॥२१॥
यद्यद्यापि ममैवाशा निवर्तयतु राघवम् । न शक्ष्यामि विना रामं मुहूर्तमपि जीवितुम् ॥२२॥
अथवापि महाबाहुर्गतो दूरं भविष्यति । मामेव रथमारोप्य शीघ्रं रामाय दर्शय ॥२३॥
वृत्तदंष्ट्रो महेष्वासः क्वासौ लक्ष्मणपूर्वजः । यदि जीवामि साध्वेनं पश्येयं सीतया सह ॥२४॥
लोहिताक्षं महाबाहुमामुक्तमणिकुण्डलम् । रामं यदि न पश्येयं गमिष्यामि यमक्षयम् ॥२५॥
अतो नु किं दुःखतरं योऽहमिक्ष्वाकुनन्दनम् । इमामवस्थामापन्नो नेह पश्यामि राघवम् ॥२६॥
हा राम रामानुज हा हा वैदेहि तपस्विनि । न मां जानीत दुःखेन म्रियमाणमनाथवत् ॥२७॥

Hearing the submission of Sumantra, Daśaratha made the following reply to the charioteer in a most pitcous tone, faltering through tears :—(17) "No deliberation was made by me (on the point of sending Rāma into exile) with the elders clever in giving counsel, dictated as I was by Kaikeyī of sinful birth and intention. (18) Without taking counsel with my well-wishers and ministers including those well-versed in the Vedas, was this step precipitately taken by me through excessive infatuation in order to please my wife. (19) Or this great calamity has surely taken us by surprise by the will of Providence for the destruction of this race, O charioteer ! (20) If at all, O charioteer, any good turn has been done to you by me, take you me at once to Rāma; (for) my senses are importunately hastening me (to catch a last glimpse of Rāma). (21) If my authority alone prevails even today, let anyone fetch Rāma back (to Ayodhya); (for) I shall not be able to survive without Rāma even for an hour or so. (22) Or may be the mighty-armed prince might have gone afar (by now). (In that case) helping me on to a chariot, promptly show me to Rāma. (23) Where is that Rāma (the eldest brother of Lakṣmaṇa) who has pearl-like teeth and is possessed of a mighty bow? I can survive only if I am properly able to see him with Sītā. (24) If I am not able to see the mighty-armed Rāma with reddish eyes and adorned with ear-rings made of gems, I shall (surely) reach the abode of Yama (the god of death). (25) What can possibly be more painful to me than the fact that I do not behold Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the delight of the Ikṣwākus, at this juncture, when I am reduced to this (wretched) plight? (26) Ah Rāma, ah Lakṣmaṇa (younger brother of Rāma), ah Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan), who are engaged in austerities, you do not know that I am dying through agony like a forlorn creature." (27)

स तेन राजा दुःखेन भृशमर्पितचेतनः । अवगाढः सुदुष्पारं शोकसागरमब्रवीत् ॥२८॥
रामशोकमहावेगः सीताविरहपारगः । श्वसितोर्मिमहावर्तो बाष्पवेगजलाविलः ॥२९॥
बाहुविक्षेपमीनोऽसौ विक्रन्दितमहास्वनः । प्रकीर्णकेशशैवालः कैकेयीवडवामुखः ॥३०॥
ममाश्रुवेगप्रभवः कुब्जावाक्यमहाग्रहः । वरवेलो नृशंसाया रामप्रव्राजनायतः ॥३१॥
यस्मिन् बत निमग्नोऽहं कौसल्ये राघवं विना । दुस्तरो जीवता देवि मयायं शोकसागरः ॥३२॥
अशोभनं योऽहमिहाद्य राघवं दिदृक्षमाणो न लभे सलक्ष्मणम् ।
इतीव राजा विलपन् महायशाः पपात तूर्णं शयने स मूर्च्छितः ॥३३॥
इति विलपति पार्थिवे प्रनष्टे करुणतरं द्विगुणं च रामहेतोः ।
वचनमनुनिशम्य तस्य देवी भयमगमत् पुनरेव राममाता ॥३४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकोनषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ५९ ॥

His mind being overwhelmed with that (unbearable) agony, and plunged as he was in that ocean of grief, which was most difficult to cross, the aforesaid king spoke of his grief in terms of an ocean (in the following words):—(28) "This ocean of grief, in which alas! I am plunged, O Kausalyā, bereft as I am of Rāma, is difficult for me to cross while I am living, O godly lady! (Consciousness of) Rāma's grief (caused by his separation from his parents, relations and friends etc.) is its tremendous force. Severance from Sītā is the other shore to which it extends. Outgoing and ingoing breaths are the waves and whirlpools. It is rendered turbid by (the water of rivers flowing into it in the shape of) the upsurge of tears (of Kausalyā and others). The throwing about of arms (in agony) represents the (leaping of) fishes. The loud wailings represent its roaring. Dishevelled hair are the sea-weeds. Kaikeyī represents the submarine fire. It is the source of (showers in the form of) the welling up of my tears. The words of Mantharā are (so many) mighty alligators infesting its waters. The couple of boons (granted by me in favour of Kaikeyī) represent its coastline and (the term of) Rāma's exile marks its extent. (29—32) It is (most) unfortunate that I am unable to clasp on Rāma (a scion of Raghu) along with Lakṣmaṇa on this spot today, even though I long to see them." Lamenting thus, that highly illustrious monarch immediately dropped senseless as it were on the couch. (33) When the emperor fainted while lamenting most piteously for Rāma as aforesaid, Queen Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother) once more fell a prey to twofold fear on hearing his wail. (34)

Thus ends Canto Fifty-nine in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LX

Sumantra does not succeed in soothing the agony of Kausalyā, who tossed about on the floor due to excess of grief over her separation from Śrī Rāma, even though he consoles her by telling her that Śrī Rāma, being resolute and high-minded, was living in the forest free from agony.

ततो भूतोपसृष्टेव वेपमाना पुनः पुनः । धरण्यां गतसत्त्वेव कौसल्या सूतमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
नय मां यत्र काकुत्स्थः सीता यत्र च लक्ष्मणः । तान् विना क्षणमप्यद्य जीवितुं नोत्सहे ह्यहम् ॥ २ ॥
निवर्तय रथं शीघ्रं दण्डकान् नय मामपि । अथ तान् नानुगच्छामि गमिष्यामि यमक्षयम् ॥ ३ ॥
बाष्पवेगोपहतया स वाचा सज्जमानया । इदमाश्वासयन् देवीं सूतः प्राञ्जलिरब्रवीत् ॥ ४ ॥
त्यज शोकं च मोहं च सम्भ्रमं दुःखजं तथा । व्यवधूय च संतापं वने वत्स्यति राघवः ॥ ५ ॥
लक्ष्मणश्चापि रामस्य पादौ परिचरन् वने । आराधयति धर्मज्ञः परलोकं जितेन्द्रियः ॥ ६ ॥

Trembling again and again as though possessed by a spirit, and lying on the floor as though life had departed from her, Kausalyā thereupon spoke to Sumantra (as follows):—(1) "Take me to the place where Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), Śītā and Lakṣmaṇa happen to be; for without them I cannot bear to live even for a moment longer today. (2) Quickly take the chariot back and convey me too to the Daṇḍaka forest. In case I do not follow them, I will proceed to the abode of Death." (3) Seeking to comfort the queen, the aforesaid charioteer submitted (to her) with joined palms as follows in a faltering voice choked with an upsurge of tears:—(4) "Abandon grief and infatuation as well as agitation born of sorrow; for, shaking off agony, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) will take up his abode in the forest. (5) Serving the feet of Śrī Rāma in the forest, Lakṣmaṇa too, who knows what is right and has subdued his senses, is straightening his path to the other world (thereby). (6)

विजनेऽपि वने सीता वासं प्राप्य गृहेष्विव । विश्रम्भं लभतेऽभीता रामे विन्यस्तमानसा ॥ ७ ॥
नास्या दैन्यं कृतं किंचित् सुसूक्ष्ममपि लक्ष्यते । उचितेव प्रवासानां वैदेही प्रतिभाति मे ॥ ८ ॥
नगरोपवनं गत्वा यथा स्म रमते पुरा । तथैव रमते सीता निर्जनेषु वनेष्वपि ॥ ९ ॥
बालेव रमते सीता बालचन्द्रनिभानना । रामा रामे ह्यदीनात्मा विजनेऽपि वने सती ॥१०॥
तद्गतं हृदयं यस्यास्तदधीनं च जीवितम् । अयोध्या हि भवेदस्या रामहीना तथा वनम् ॥११॥
परिपृच्छति वैदेही ग्रामांश्च नगराणि च । गतिं दृष्ट्वा नदीनां च पादपान् विविधानपि ॥१२॥
रामं वा लक्ष्मणं वापि दृष्ट्वा जानाति जानकी । अयोध्या क्रोशमात्रे तु विहारमिव सा श्रिता ॥१३॥
इदमेव स्मराम्यस्याः सहसैवोपजल्पितम् । कैकेयीसंश्रितं जल्पं नेदानीं प्रतिभाति माम् ॥१४॥

"Getting her abode even in a lonely forest, Sītā, whose mind stands focussed on Śrī Rāma, remains undaunted and enjoys complacence (even) as in her (own) house. (7) Not the faintest dejection of any kind caused by her exile is traceable in her. The daughter of Janaka (the ruler of the Videha kingdom) appears to me as though accustomed to staying away from home (now and then). (8) Sītā finds as much delight in lonely forests as she used to do in the past whenever she visited the groves in the precincts of the city. (9) The charming and virtuous Sītā, whose countenance shone like the full moon and who was (ever) undepressed in spirits, surely found delight as a girl even in the lonely forest in the presence of Śrī Rāma. (10) Devoid of Śrī Rāma (however) Ayodhya too would be no better than a forest to Sītā, whose heart is intent on him and whose life is dependent on him. (11) Seeing villages and cities too as well as the flow of rivers as also trees of every description, Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan) makes inquiries (concerning them of Rāma or Lakṣmaṇa, whoever is by her side). (12) Finding Śrī Rāma or Lakṣmaṇa (beside her), the daughter of Janaka feels that she is as it were on a visit to a pleasure-garden only a couple of miles away from Ayodhya. (13) I remember only this much pertaining to Sītā. The remark uttered by her only in an unguarded moment concerning Kaikeyī does not strike me (just) at present." (14)

ध्वंसयित्वा तु तद् वाक्यं प्रमादात् पर्युपस्थितम् । ह्लादनं वचनं सूतो देव्या मधुरमब्रवीत् ॥१५॥
अध्वना वातवेगेन सम्भ्रमेणातपेन च । न विगच्छति वैदेह्याश्चन्द्रांशुसदृशी प्रभा ॥१६॥
सदृशं शतपत्रस्य पूर्णचन्द्रोपमप्रभम् । वदनं तद् वदान्याया वैदेह्या न विकम्पते ॥१७॥
अलक्तरसरक्ताभावलक्तरसवर्जितौ । अद्यापि चरणौ तस्याः पद्मकोशसमप्रभौ ॥१८॥
नूपुरोत्कृष्टलीलेव खेलं गच्छति भामिनी । इदानीमपि वैदेही तद्रागान्यस्तभूषणा ॥१९॥
गजं वा वीक्ष्य सिंहं वा व्याघ्रं वा वनमाश्रिता । नाहारयति संत्रासं बाहू रामस्य संश्रिता ॥२०॥
न शोच्यास्ते न चात्मा ते शोच्यो नापि जनाधिपः । इदं हि चरितं लोके प्रतिष्ठास्यति शाश्वतम् ॥२१॥
विधूय शोकं परिहृष्टमानसा महर्षियाते पथि सुव्यवस्थिताः ।
वने रता वन्यफलाशनाः पितुः शुभां प्रतिज्ञां प्रतिपालयन्ति ते ॥२२॥
तथापि सूतेन सुयुक्तवादिना निवार्यमाणा सुतशोककर्शिता ।
न चैव देवी विरराम कूजितात् प्रियेति पुत्रेति च राघवेति च ॥२३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६० ॥

Skipping over that reference that had escaped from his lips through inadvertence, the charioteer spoke the following agreeable words that brought delight to the queen:—(15) "The splendour of Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan), which resembles the moonlight, does not fade through (fatigue of the) journey, the violence of the winds, agitation (caused by the sight of fearful beasts etc.) and the heat of the sun. (16) The well-known face of sweet-speaking Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan), which resembles a lotus and whose effulgence vies with that of the full moon, never fades. (17) Her soles, which, though no longer painted with Alakta (the red juice obtained from the resin of certain trees), still look red as Alakta and cast an effulgence akin to that of a lotus bud. (18) The high-minded Sītā (a princess of the Videha clan), who has not renounced her jewels out of love for Śrī Rāma (who is pleased to see her adorned), walks in a charming gait, as though outvying the cackling of swans by (the music of) her anklets. (19) Though living in the forest, she does not give way to fear on seeing an elephant or a lion or a tiger, fully dependent as she is on the arms of Śrī Rāma. (20) Neither they nor your own self nor the king deserves to be pitied. This story (of Śrī Rāma) will abide in the world for ever. (21) Having shaken off grief, the (three) exiles, who are firmly established with a highly delighted mind on the path trodden by eminent sages and are enamoured of the forest, are fully implementing the sacred vow of their father, living on wild fruits (etc. alone)." (22) Even though being forbidden in the aforesaid manner by the charioteer, who spoke highly reasonable words, the queen (Kausalyā), who was torn with grief caused by separation from her son, did not cease in the least from crying out: "O my darling! O my son!! O scion of Raghu !!!" (23)

Thus ends Canto Sixty in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXI

Apprehending danger to the king from his inability to bear the grief caused by separation from Śrī Rāma, Kausalyā, though foremost among devoted wives, twits Daśaratha.

वनं गते धर्मरते रामे रमयतां वरे । कौसल्या रुदती चार्ता भर्तारमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
यद्यपि त्रिषु लोकेषु प्रथितं ते महद् यशः । सानुक्रोशो वदान्यश्च प्रियवादी च राघवः ॥ २ ॥
कथं नरवरश्रेष्ठ पुत्रौ तौ सह सीतया । दुःखितौ सुखसंवृद्धौ वने दुःखं सहिष्यतः ॥ ३ ॥
सा नूनं तरुणी श्यामा सुकुमारी सुखोचिता । कथमुष्णं च शीतं च मैथिली विसहिष्यते ॥ ४ ॥
भुक्त्वाशनं विशालाक्षी सूपदंशान्वितं शुभम् । वन्यं नैवारमाहारं कथं सीतोपभोक्ष्यते ॥ ५ ॥
गीतवादित्रनिर्घोषं श्रुत्वा शुभसमन्विता । कथं क्रव्यादसिंहानां शब्दं श्रोष्यत्यशोभनम् ॥ ६ ॥

Śrī Rāma, who was devoted to righteousness and was the foremost among those who bring delight (to the people), having departed for the forest, Kausalyā, who was feeling distressed (due to separation from her son) spoke weeping to her husband as follows:—(1) "Although your great glory is extended through (all) the three worlds, and it is well known that you (a scion of Raghu) are full of compassion and generous and speak kindly (to all), you never paused to think how your aforesaid two sons (Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) with Sītā, who have been brought up in ease, will endure suffering in the forest when faced with hardships, O jewel among the foremost of men! (2-3) Indeed how will that young and delicate-bodied princess of Mithila, who is still about sixteen years of age and is deserving of comforts, bear heat and cold? (4) How, having partaken of a rich diet with delicious sauces and other seasoned articles, will the large-eyed Sītā live on meals consisting of wild rice? (5) How, having listened to the sweet strains of vocal and instrumental music, will Sītā (who is richly endowed with auspicious qualities) bear to hear the unpleasant roar of lions, animals that feed on flesh? (6)

महेन्द्रध्वजसंकाशः क नु शेते महाभुजः । भुजं परिघसंकाशमुपाधाय महाबलः ॥ ७ ॥
पद्मवर्णं सुकेशान्तं पद्मनिःश्वासमुत्तमम् । कदा द्रक्ष्यामि रामस्य वदनं पुष्करेक्षणम् ॥ ८ ॥
वज्रसारमयं नूनं हृदयं मे न संशयः । अपश्यन्त्या न तं यद् वै फलतीदं सहस्रधा ॥ ९ ॥
यत् त्वया करुणं कर्म व्यपोह्य मम बान्धवाः । निरस्ताः परिधावन्ति सुखार्हाः कृपणा वने ॥१०॥
यदि पञ्चदशे वर्षे राघवः पुनरेष्यति । जह्याद् राज्यं च कोशं च भरतो नोपलक्ष्यते ॥११॥

"Where does the mighty-armed prince (Rāma),—who is possessed of great might and resembles (in delighting all) the banner raised in honour of the mighty Indra on the 12th of the bright half of Bhādrapada as a mark of festivities,—repose placing his arm, stout as an iron club, under his head for support? (7) When shall I behold (again) the exquisite countenance of Rāma, which possesses the hue of a lotus (leaf) and is decked with lovely locks, (nay) whose breath emits the fragrance of a lotus and which is possessed of lotus-like eyes? (8) Surely my heart is made of a substance as hard as adamant: there is no doubt about it, as (is clear from the fact that) it does not break into a thousand pieces even while I do not behold him! (9) (Indeed) it was a cruel act (on your part) that, expelled by you, my near and dear ones, who were deserving of comforts, knock about in a wretched condition in the forest, leaving the city! (10) (Even) if Rāma (a scion of Raghu) returns (to Ayodhya) in the fifteenth year, it is not expected that Bharata will relinquish the sovereignty and the exchequer. (11)

भोजयन्ति किल श्राद्धे केचित् स्वानेव बान्धवान् । ततः पश्चात् समीक्षन्ते कृतकार्या द्विजोत्तमान् ॥१२॥
तत्र ये गुणवन्तश्च विद्वांसश्च द्विजातयः । न पश्चात् तेऽभिमन्यन्ते सुधामपि सुरोपमाः ॥१३॥
ब्राह्मणेष्वपि वृत्तेषु भुक्तशेषं द्विजोत्तमाः । नाभ्युपेतुमलं प्राज्ञाः शृङ्गच्छेदमिवर्षभाः ॥१४॥
एवं कनीयसा भ्रात्रा भुक्तं राज्यं विशाम्पते । भ्राता ज्येष्ठो वरिष्ठश्च किमर्थं नावमन्यते ॥१५॥
न परेणाहृतं भक्ष्यं व्याघ्रः खादितुमिच्छति । एवमेव नरव्याघ्रः परलीढं न मंस्यते ॥१६॥
हविराज्यं पुरोडाशः कुशा यूपाश्च खादिराः । नैतानि यातयामानि कुर्वन्ति पुनरध्वरे ॥१७॥
तथा ह्यात्तमिदं राज्यं हृतसारां सुरामिव । नाभिमन्तुमलं रामो नष्टसोममिवाध्वरम् ॥१८॥
नैवंविधमसत्कारं राघवो मर्षयिष्यति । बलवानिव शार्दूलो वालधेरभिमर्शनम् ॥१९॥

"It is a well-known fact that some householders feed their own relations (daughter's sons and others) on the occasion of a Śrāddha (a ceremony in honour and for the benefit of dead relatives on their death anniversary and at other times) and their object (in the shape of making special gifts in their favour) having been accomplished, attend to the foremost of (other) Brahmans (invited for the Śrāddha) afterwards. (12) Of them such Brahmans as are men of character, learned and godlike do not accept afterwards even food which is delicious as ambrosia. (13) Even though it may be Brahmans that have finished their meals (in the first instance), great Brahmans, who are highly enlightened, would not consent to partake of what is left after others have finished their meal, any more than bulls of excellent breed would brook the severance of their horns. (14) Why (then) will Rāma (who is the eldest and most deserving brother) not likewise disdain a kingship (already) enjoyed by a younger brother, O ruler of the people? (15) A tiger would not partake of the food brought by another; even so Rāma (a tiger among men) would not set his heart on that which has been enjoyed by another. (16) The wise do not use for a second time in a sacrifice the following already used (in another sacrifice), *viz*, sacrificial food, ghee, Puroḍāśa (a mass of ground rice rounded into a kind of cake, usually divided into pieces placed on receptacles and offered as an oblation in fire), blades of Kuśa grass and sacrificial posts of Khadira wood. (17) Even so Rāma (too) will not be able to accept this sovereignty already enjoyed (by Bharata), any more than one would set one's heart on wine deprived of its essence or on the remnants of the beverage called Soma, which is drunk during sacrificial performances. (18) Rāma (a scion of Raghu) will not suffer such indignity any more than a mighty tiger would brook the twisting of its tail. (19)

नैतस्य सहिता लोका भयं कुर्युर्महामृधे । अधर्मं त्विह धर्मात्मा लोकं धर्मेण योजयेत् ॥२०॥
नन्वसौ काञ्चनैर्बाणैर्महावीर्यो महाभुजः । युगान्त इव भूतानि सागरानपि निर्दहेत् ॥२१॥
स तादृशः सिंहबलो वृषभाक्षो नरर्षभः । स्वयमेव हतः पित्रा जलजेनात्मजो यथा ॥२२॥
द्विजातिचरितो धर्मः शास्त्रे दृष्टः सनातनैः । यदि ते धर्मनिरते त्वया पुत्रे विवासिते ॥२३॥
गतिरेका पतिर्नार्या द्वितीया गतिरात्मजः । तृतीया ज्ञातयो राजंश्चतुर्थी नैव विद्यते ॥२४॥
तत्र त्वं मम नैवासि रामश्च वनमाहितः । न वनं गन्तुमिच्छामि सर्वथा हा हता त्वया ॥२५॥
हतं त्वया राष्ट्रमिदं सराज्यं हताः स्म सर्वाः सह मन्त्रिभिश्च ।
हता सपुत्रास्मि हताश्च पौराः सुतश्च भार्या च तव प्रहृष्टौ ॥२६॥

(All) the worlds combined (against him) would not be able to inspire terror into him (even) in a major conflict. He (however) did not wrest the throne of Ayodhya (even though capable of doing so) because, his mind being intent on righteousness, he is vowed to lead (even) unrighteous people towards righteousness (by setting a noble example before them). (20) That mighty-armed prince, possessed as he is of extraordinary might, can, if he so wills, even dry up the oceans by his shafts with gilded feathers (even) as the god of destruction dissolves the elements at the time of universal dissolution. (21) That jewel among men, who is so powerful as indicated above, nay, who, possesses the strength of a lion and has eyes big as those of a bull, has been ruined by his own father even as the brood of a fish are devoured by the fish itself. (22) A son who is deeply devoted to righteousness having been exiled by you, it is problematic whether the path of virtue discovered by the ancient sages and followed by the twice-born really exists in your eyes. (23) The main support of a woman is her husband, the second is her son, the third is her kindred; there is no fourth support at all, O king ! (24) Of the aforementioned (three) supports, you (my husband) are surely no support for me (inasmuch as you are under the thumb of my co-wife;) while Rāma has been sent away to the forest. I do not wish to proceed to the forest (since I cannot live apart from you). (In this way) alas ! I have been utterly destroyed by you. (25) This kingdom (of Kosala) along with other (neighbouring) kingdoms has been ruined by you. Nay, we all (your people) along with the counsellors have been destroyed by you. I stand doomed with my son (Rāma). The citizens too have been ruined. Only your son (Bharata) and wife (Kaikeyī) feel greatly delighted." (26)

इमां गिरं दारुणशब्दसंहितां निशम्य रामेति मुमोह दुःखितः ।
ततः स शोकं प्रविवेश पार्थिवः स्वदुष्कृतं चापि पुनस्तथास्मरत् ॥२७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६१ ॥

Distressed to hear this condemnation (of the emperor by Kausalyā), couched in harsh words, the emperor fell into a swoon, crying "O Rāma!" He then got plunged in grief and also vividly recalled once more his (past) misdeed (responsible for his present calamity). (27)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-one in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्विषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXII

When reproached in harsh words by Kausalyā, though already feeling disconsolate through separation from his sons and daughter-in-law, Daśaratha falls into a swoon recalling his past sin in the form of killing a hermit boy, which was responsible for his present misfortune. On waking from his swoon he tries with joined palms to conciliate Kausalyā and on the latter reciprocating his sentiments, the emperor is lulled into a nap.

एवं तु क्रुद्धया राजा राममात्रा सशोकया । श्रावितः परुषं वाक्यं चिन्तयामास दुःखितः ॥ १ ॥
चिन्तयित्वा स च नृपो मोहव्याकुलितेन्द्रियः । अथ दीर्घेण कालेन संज्ञामाप परंतपः ॥ २ ॥
स संज्ञामुपलभ्यैव दीर्घमुष्णं च निःश्वसन् । कौसल्यां पार्श्वतो दृष्ट्वा ततश्चिन्तामुपागमत् ॥ ३ ॥
तस्य चिन्तयमानस्य प्रत्यभात् कर्म दुष्कृतम् । यदनेन कृतं पूर्वमज्ञानाच्छब्दवेधिना ॥ ४ ॥
अमनास्तेन शोकेन रामशोकेन च प्रभुः । द्वाभ्यामपि महाराजः शोकाभ्यामभितप्यते ॥ ५ ॥
दह्यमानस्तु शोकाभ्यां कौसल्यामाह दुःखितः । वेपमानोऽञ्जलिं कृत्वा प्रसादार्थमवाङ्मुखः ॥ ६ ॥

Told harsh words as aforesaid by the angry Kausalyā (Śrī Rāma's mother), who was full of grief, the king for his part felt distressed and fell a brooding. (1) Nay, having reflected (a while) the aforesaid monarch found his senses confused due to (a spell of) unconsciousness. And it was after a long time that the emperor (who was noted for subduing his enemies) regained consciousness. (2) Again, heaving a doleful sigh immediately on regaining consciousness, he relapsed into brooding on seeing Kausalyā by his side. (3) (Even) as he reflected, the sinful deed that had been unwittingly perpetrated by him in the past while hitting a mark (screened from sight) with the help of sound (alone) flashed on his mind. (4) The mighty emperor felt disconcerted through remorse caused by the thought (of that sinful deed) as well as through grief born of separation from Śrī Rāma and was tormented with the dual grief. (5) Joining his palms in order to propitiate Kausalyā, the king, who was being consumed by the twofold grief and was feeling afflicted (thereby), spoke trembling (as follows) to Kausalyā, his face hanging downward:— (6)

प्रसादये त्वां कौसल्ये रचितोऽयं मयाञ्जलिः । वत्सला चानृशंसा च त्वं हि नित्यं परेष्वपि ॥ ७ ॥
भर्ता तु खलु नारीणां गुणवान् निर्गुणोऽपि वा । धर्मं विमृशमानानां प्रत्यक्षं देवि दैवतम् ॥ ८ ॥
सा त्वं धर्मपरा नित्यं दृष्टलोकपरावरा । नार्हसे विप्रियं वक्तुं दुःखितापि सुदुःखितम् ॥ ९ ॥
तद् वाक्यं करुणं राज्ञः श्रुत्वा दीनस्य भाषितम् । कौसल्या व्यसृजद् बाष्पं प्रणालीव नवोदकम् ॥१०॥
सा मूर्ध्नि बद्ध्वा रुदती राज्ञः पद्ममिवाञ्जलिम् । सम्भ्रमादब्रवीत् त्रस्ता त्वरमाणाक्षरं वचः ॥११॥

"I seek your favour, O Kausalyā ! Here is my supplication to you (with joined palms). In fact you are ever full of affection even to your enemies and tender-hearted. (7) The husband for his part, be he full of virtues or even lacking in them, is indeed a visible deity to ladies knowing what is right, O godly lady ! (8) Though afflicted, you, who are not only conversant with the principles of righteousness of every king but also ever devoted to righteousness and have seen (both) good and evil fortune in the world, ought not to have told me unpalatable things, greatly afflicted as I am." (9) Hearing that piteous appeal uttered by the wretched king, Kausalyā shed tears (even) as a drain allows rain water to flow through it. (10) Interlocking on her (own) head the king's palms joined in the form of a lotus, Kausalyā, who felt dismayed (with the thought of having wronged her husband), spoke weeping in hurried tones through confusion (as follows):—(11)

प्रसीद शिरसा याचे भूमौ निपतितास्मि ते । याचितास्मि हता देव क्षन्तव्याहं नहि त्वया ॥१२॥
नैषा हि सा स्त्री भवति श्लाघनीयेन धीमता । उभयोर्लोकयोर्लोके पत्या या सम्प्रसाद्यते ॥१३॥
जानामि धर्मं धर्मज्ञ त्वां जाने सत्यवादिनम् । पुत्रशोकार्तया तत्तु मया किमपि भाषितम् ॥१४॥
शोको नाशयते धैर्यं शोको नाशयते श्रुतम् । शोको नाशयते सर्वं नास्ति शोकसमो रिपुः ॥१५॥
शक्यमापतितः सोढुं प्रहारो रिपुहस्ततः । सोढुमापतितः शोकः सुसूक्ष्मोऽपि न शक्यते ॥१६॥
वनवासाय रामस्य पञ्चरात्रोऽत्र गण्यते । यः शोकहतहर्षायाः पञ्चवर्षोपमो मम ॥१७॥
तं हि चिन्तयमानायाः शोकोऽयं हृदि वर्धते । नदीनामिव वेगेन समुद्रसलिलं महत् ॥१८॥
एवं हि कथयन्त्यास्तु कौसल्यायाः शुभं वचः । मन्दरश्मिरभूत् सूर्यो रजनी चाभ्यवर्तत ॥१९॥
अथ प्रह्लादितो वाक्यैर्देव्या कौसल्यया नृपः । शोकेन च समाक्रान्तो निद्राया वशमेयिवान् ॥२०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्विषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६२ ॥

"Be gracious (to me): I entreat you with bowed head and lie prostrate (at your feet). Since I have been entreated by you (my superior, which is a matter for shame to me), I am ruined. In any case I do not deserve to be pardoned by you (and court punishment at your hands for the wrong done by me to you). (12) Surely she is not a woman of noble descent, who is earnestly propitiated by her wise husband, who is praiseworthy (adorable) for her in both the worlds. (13) I know my duty (towards you), O knower of what is right, and (also) know you to be veracious. Something unseemly was, however, uttered by me, stricken as I was with grief caused by separation from my son. (14) Grief eradicates patience, grief effaces learning. Grief destroys all, there is no enemy like grief. (15) A blow that has descended from the hands of an enemy can be sustained. Grief (however) that has appeared all of a sudden cannot be endured even though it is very minute. (16) The period of five nights that has elapsed since Rāma left for sojourning in the forest is reckoned as equal (in length) to five years at this moment by me, whose joy has been marred by grief. (17) Even as I think of Rāma, this grief (born of separation from him) abiding in my breast grows (in intensity), in the same way as the water of an ocean swells with the rapid inflow of rivers." (18) While Kausalyā was speaking conciliatory words as aforesaid, the sun's rays became faint and the night prevailed. (19) Cheered by Queen Kausalyā in so many words and overpowered by grief, the king forthwith fell into the grip of slumber. (20)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-two in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रिषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXIII

Waking from sleep after a while and recalling his sinful deed, which spelt death to him, Daśaratha proceeds to tell Kausalyā how, while he was Prince Regent of Ayodhya, he went out a hunting in the forest one day and heard during the last watch of the night the sound of a hermit boy filling his pitcher with water by submerging into Sarayu river. Mistaking the gurgling sound for the trumpeting of an elephant, the prince hit the boy with an arrow, which dug deep into his body and mortally wounded him. On approaching his quarry he discovered the fatal blunder and tendered his heartfelt apology to the hermit boy, who asked him to extract the arrow from his body and report the matter to his aged parents. The boy died immediately the arrow was taken out of his body.

प्रतिबुद्धो मुहूर्तेन शोकोपहतचेतनः । अथ राजा दशरथः स चिन्तामभ्यपद्यत ॥ १ ॥
रामलक्ष्मणयोश्चैव विवासाद् वासवोपमम् । आपेदे उपसर्गस्तं तमः सूर्यमिवासुरम् ॥ २ ॥
सभार्ये हि गते रामे कौसल्यां कोसलेश्वरः । विवक्षुरसितापाङ्गीं स्मृत्वा दुष्कृतमात्मनः ॥ ३ ॥
स राजा रजनीं षष्ठीं रामे प्रव्राजिते वनम् । अर्धरात्रे दशरथः सोऽस्मरद् दुष्कृतं कृतम् ॥ ४ ॥
स राजा पुत्रशोकार्तः स्मृत्वा दुष्कृतमात्मनः । कौसल्यां पुत्रशोकार्तामिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ ५ ॥

Having awoke from sleep after an hour or so, the said King Daśaratha, whose mind was obscured through grief, (now) fell a prey to anxiety. (1) Consequent on the banishment of Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa grief had seized the king, who vied (in might and splendour) with Indra (the ruler of gods), (even) as obscurity, which is attributed to the demon Rāhu (also recognized as a planet), seizes the sun (at the time of a solar eclipse). (2) Recollecting his misdeed (as responsible for his present misfortune in the shape of separation from his sons and daughter-in-law) when Śrī Rāma had actually departed (for the forest) with his wife (and Lakṣmaṇa), Daśaratha (the king of Kosala) felt inclined to tell Kausalyā, the corners of whose eyes were noted for their dark colour, (all) about it. (3) On the sixth night after Śrī Rāma had been sent into exile the celebrated King Daśaratha remembered at midnight the misdeed perpetrated (by him). (4) Recollecting his misdeed, the aforesaid monarch, who was stricken with grief caused by separation from his son, spoke as follows to Kausalyā, who was (equally) stricken with grief born of separation from her son:— (5)

यदाचरति कल्याणि शुभं वा यदि वाशुभम् । तदेव लभते भद्रे कर्ता कर्मजमात्मनः ॥ ६ ॥
गुरुलाघवमर्थानामारम्भे कर्मणां फलम् । दोषं वा यो न जानाति स बाल इति होच्यते ॥ ७ ॥
कश्चिदाम्रवणं छित्त्वा पलाशांश्च निषिञ्चति । पुष्पं दृष्ट्वा फले गृध्नुः स शोचति फलागमे ॥ ८ ॥
अविज्ञाय फलं यो हि कर्म त्वेवानुधावति । स शोचेत् फलवेलायां यथा किंशुकसेचकः ॥ ९ ॥
सोऽहमाम्रवणं छित्त्वा पलाशांश्च न्यषेचयम् । रामं फलागमे त्यक्त्वा पश्चाच्छोचामि दुर्मतिः ॥१०॥

"A doer surely reaps, O blessed lady, the fruit of his own deeds corresponding to the nature, good or evil, of that which he does, O gracious one ! (6) He who does not reckon, while undertaking actions, the relative importance of their fruits as well as the advantages or disadvantages accruing from them is surely dubbed as a fool. (7) Anyone who, cutting down a (whole) mango grove (because of its unattractive and tiny blossoms) nourishes (a cluster of) Palāśa trees expecting (large and luscious) fruits on seeing their (charming and big) flowers repents at the time of their fruition. (8) Indeed like the man who nourishes a Kiṃśuka tree, he who embarks on action alone, not minding the consequences, is sure to repent when the action bears fruit. (9) Cutting down a mango grove I have accordingly watered Palāśa trees and sending away Rāma (to the forest) at a time when the said mango grove was going to bear fruit, I repent, a fool that I am ! (10)

लब्धशब्देन कौसल्ये कुमारेण धनुष्मता । कुमारः शब्दवेधीति मया पापमिदं कृतम् ॥११॥
तदिदं मेऽनुसम्प्राप्तं देवि दुःखं स्वयंकृतम् । सम्मोहादिह बालेन यथा स्याद् भक्षितं विषम् ॥१२॥
यथान्यः पुरुषः कश्चित् पलाशैर्मोहितो भवेत् । एवं मयाप्यविज्ञातं शब्दवेध्यमिदं फलम् ॥१३॥
देव्यनूढा त्वमभवो युवराजो भवाम्यहम् । ततः प्रावृडनुप्राप्ता मम कामविवर्धिनी ॥१४॥

"The sin which I am going to describe (now) was perpetrated by me, O Kausalyā, while I was (yet) a prince wielding a bow (and arrows) and had won the title of a prince clever in hitting an invisible mark with the help of a sound made by it. (11) This disaster, which was earned by myself, has been reaped by me, O godly lady, in the same way as poison may be swallowed by a child through excessive folly. (12) (Even) as a common man would be deluded by the (charming red) blossoms of a Palāśa tree (and misled to think that it would yield equally large and delicious fruits), so it was never suspected by me that the dexterity (acquired by me) in hitting an invisible mark with the help of its sound would yield such a disastrous result. (13) You were not married (with me till then), O pious lady, and I was (only) Prince Regent (at that time). Then set in the monsoon, which keenly enhanced my passion (for hunting). (14)

अपास्य हि रसान् भौमांस्तप्त्वा च जगदंशुभिः । परेताचरितां भीमां रविराचरते दिशम् ॥१५॥
उष्णमन्तर्दधे सद्यः स्निग्धा ददृशिरे घनाः । ततो जहृषिरे सर्वे भेकसारङ्गबर्हिणः ॥१६॥
क्लिन्नपक्षोत्तराः स्नाताः कृच्छ्रादिव पतत्रिणः । वृष्टिवातावधूताग्रान् पादपानभिपेदिरे ॥१७॥
पतितेनाम्भसाऽऽच्छन्नः पतमानेन चासकृत् । आबभौ मत्तसारङ्गस्तोयराशिरिवाचलः ॥१८॥
पाण्डुरारुणवर्णानि स्रोतांसि विमलान्यपि । सुस्रुवुर्गिरिधातुभ्यः सभस्मानि भुजंगवत् ॥१९॥

"Sucking the moisture of the earth and scorching the world with its rays, the sun had begun to course through the (southern) quarter haunted by spirits and therefore exciting fear. (15) Clouds laden with moisture appeared (in the sky) and the heat vanished all of a sudden. Frogs, the Chātaka birds and peacocks all rejoiced in consequence. (16) Birds, which had the upper part of their wings drenched and which (therefore) looked as though bathed, could reach with difficulty the trees (on which they had nestled and), whose ends were shaken by rain and the winds. (17) Covered by the (rain) water (already) fallen and (still) repeatedly falling (on it), the mountain with elephants in rut looked like an ocean. (18) Cascades carrying transparent waters ran in a serpentine course assuming a white, ruddy and ashy colour (on the way) due to contact with mountain-minerals (of those colours). (19)

तस्मिन्नतिसुखे काले धनुष्मानिषुमान् रथी । व्यायामकृतसंकल्पः सरयूमन्वगां नदीम् ॥२०॥
निपाने महिषं रात्रौ गजं वाभ्यागतं मृगम् । अन्यद् वा श्वापदं किंचिज्जिघांसुरजितेन्द्रियः ॥२१॥
अथान्धकारे त्वश्रौषं जले कुम्भस्य पूर्यतः । अचक्षुर्विषये घोषं वारणस्येव नर्दतः ॥२२॥
ततोऽहं शरमुद्धृत्य दीप्तमाशीविषोपमम् । शब्दं प्रति गजप्रेप्सुरभिलक्ष्यमपातयम् ॥२३॥
अमुञ्चं निशितं बाणमहमाशीविषोपमम् । तत्र वागुषसि व्यक्ता प्रादुरासीद् वनौकसः ॥२४॥
हा हेति पततस्तोये बाणाद् व्यथितमर्मणः । तस्मिन्निपतिते भूमौ वागभूत् तत्र मानुषी ॥२५॥

"Having made up my mind to take some exercise (by way of hunting), and with my senses uncontrolled, I drove at that most agreeable period in a chariot to the river Sarayu, equipped with a bow and arrows and wishing to hunt at night a (wild) buffalo, an elephant or any other beast of prey or deer, accidentally arrived at some ford (in the river). (20-21) Presently in the darkness I for my part heard the sound of a pitcher being filled in with water (of the river), resembling the sound of a trumpeting elephant, at a place which was not before my eyes. (22) Taking out (from my quiver) an effulgent arrow, resembling a snake (in its deadly effect), I then discharged it in the direction of the sound in the hope of hitting the mark, as I wished to bag the elephant (after killing it). (23) In the quarter where I hurled my sharp arrow, resembling a snake (in its deadly effect), there emerged in the dawn the clear wail of a dweller in the forest dropping down in water, his vital part tormented with pain caused by the arrow. On his having dropped down to the ground issued forth on that (very) spot a human voice saying :—(24-25)

कथमस्मद्विधे शस्त्रं निपतेच्च तपस्विनि । प्रविविक्तां नदीं रात्रावुदाहारोऽहमागतः ॥२६॥
इषुणाभिहतः केन कस्य वापकृतं मया । ऋषेर्हि न्यस्तदण्डस्य वने वन्येन जीवतः ॥२७॥
कथं नु शस्त्रेण वधो मद्विधस्य विधीयते । जटाभारधरस्यैव वल्कलाजिनवाससः ॥२८॥

को वधेन ममार्थी स्यात् किं वास्यापकृतं मया । एवं निष्फलमारब्धं केवलानर्थसंहितम् ॥२९॥
न क्वचित् साधु मन्येत यथैव गुरुतल्पगम् । नेमं तथानुशोचामि जीवितक्षयमात्मनः ॥३०॥
मातरं पितरं चोभावनुशोचामि मद्वधे । तदेतन्मिथुनं वृद्धं चिरकालभृतं मया ॥३१॥
मयि पञ्चत्वमापन्ने कां वृत्तिं वर्तयिष्यति । वृद्धौ च मातापितरावहं चैकेषुणा हतः ॥३२॥
केन स्म निहताः सर्वे सुबालेनाकृतात्मना ।

'How could a weapon descend on an ascetic like myself (who can have no enemy)? I came at (the close of) night to this exceedingly lonely river (bank) with the intention of drawing water. (26) By whom have I been hit with an arrow? Or to whom could offence have been given by me, a seer who has forsworn (every form of) violence and who was living in a forest on the produce of the forest? (27) How can the killing by means of a weapon of an ascetic like me, wearing a mass of matted hair (on his head) and clad in the bark of trees and deer-skin, be enjoined (by the scriptures)? (28) Who can have any interest in killing me or what offence has been given by me to the man who has hit me with an arrow? In this way a futile act has been done by him, and an act which will be attended with evil consequences alone. (29) Nowhere will anyone admire him any more than one would admire a man seeking the bed of his preceptor's wife. I do not grieve for this loss of my life so much as for (the fate of) my father and mother both on my expiry. By what means of subsistence will this aged couple, maintained for long by me, support themselves when I have met my end? My aged parents as well as myself stand killed with a single arrow. By what ignorant fool of an uncontrolled mind have we all been done to death?'

तां गिरं करुणां श्रुत्वा मम धर्मानुकाङ्क्षिणः ॥३३॥
कराभ्यां सशरं चापं व्यथितस्यापतद् भुवि । तस्याहं करुणं श्रुत्वा ऋषेर्विलपतो निशि ॥३४॥
सम्भ्रान्तः शोकवेगेन भृशमासं विचेतनः । तं देशमहमागम्य दीनसत्त्वः सुदुर्मनाः ॥३५॥
अपश्यमिषुणा तीरे सरय्वास्तापसं हतम् । अवकीर्णजटाभारं प्रविद्धकलशोदकम् ॥३६॥
पांसुशोणितदिग्धाङ्गं शयानं शल्यवेधितम् । स मामुद्वीक्ष्य नेत्राभ्यां त्रस्तमस्वस्थचेतनम् ॥३७॥
इत्युवाच वचः क्रूरं दिधक्षन्निव तेजसा ।

"The bow with an arrow (which I held in my hands at the moment) dropped from my hands to the ground, distressed as I was to hear that plaintive cry, and sought (only) to do what is right. Hearing the piteous lament of the seer, who was wailing during (the close of) the night, I lost my consciousness again and again, utterly confounded as I was due to the outburst of grief. Reaching the place where he lay, distressed in mind and extremely sad at heart as I was, I beheld the ascetic lying on the bank of the Sarayu, struck with an arrow and pierced with its point, the mass of matted hair (on his head) put out of order, the water of his pitcher run out and his limbs besmeared with dust and blood. Staring at me, who stood alarmed and sick in mind, with his (blood shot) eyes as if going to consume me with his glory, he addressed the following harsh words (to me):—

किं तवापकृतं राजन् वने निवसता मया ॥३८॥
जिहीर्षुरम्भो गुर्वर्थं यदहं ताडितस्त्वया । एकेन खलु बाणेन मर्मण्यभिहते मयि ॥३९॥

द्वावन्धौ निहतौ वृद्धौ माता जनयिता च मे । तौ नूनं दुर्बलावन्धौ मत्प्रतीक्षौ पिपासितौ ॥४०॥
चिरमाशां कृतां कष्टां तृष्णां संधारयिष्यतः । न नूनं तपसो वास्ति फलयोगः श्रुतस्य वा ॥४१॥
पिता यन्मां न जानीते शयानं पतितं भुवि । जानन्नपि च किं कुर्यादशक्तश्चापरिक्रमः ॥४२॥
भिद्यमानमिवाशक्तस्त्रातुमन्यो नगो नगम् । पितुस्त्वमेव मे गत्वा शीघ्रमाचक्ष्व राघव ॥४३॥
न त्वामनुदहेत् क्रुद्धो वनमग्निरिवैधितः । इयमेकपदी राजन् यतो मे पितुराश्रमः ॥४४॥
तं प्रसादय गत्वा त्वं न त्वा संकुपितः शपेत् । विशल्यं कुरु मां राजन् मर्म मे निशितः शरः ॥४५॥
रुणद्धि मृदु सोत्सेधं तीरमम्बुरयो यथा ।

'What wrong was done by me to you, O king, living as I did in the forest, that while inlening to take water for my parents I was hit by you? On my being hit in a vital part with a single arrow, my blind and aged mother and father both have been virtually killed. Feeble, blind and thirsty, they must be (anxiously) waiting for me and will be cherishing since long the hope of getting water, placed in me, and enduring their painful thirst. Surely askesis or learning has not (yet) borne fruit (in my case or in the case of my father); for my father does not know (anything) about myself having fallen down (mortally wounded) and lying on the ground. Even if he knew, what could he do, feeble and unable as he is to move, and (in this way) as incapable of protecting me as any tree is incapable of protecting a (neighbouring) tree which is going to be rent asunder. Seeking the presence of my father, O scion of Raghu, speak you alone to him speedily (about me). (30—43) (If you take courage in both hands and confess your guilt before him, I am sure) he will not burn you in his wrath as a swollen fire would consume a forest. Here is the track by which my father's hermitage can be reached. (44) Approaching him, seek his forgiveness lest he should get enraged and execrate you. Render me free from pain (by extracting the shaft from my body), O king, since your sharp-pointed arrow torments my vital part in the same way as a river-current corrodes a high sandy bank.'

सशल्यः क्लिश्यते प्राणैर्विशल्यो विनशिष्यति ॥४६॥
इति मामविशच्चिन्ता तस्य शल्यापकर्षणे । दुःखितस्य च दीनस्य मम शोकातुरस्य च ॥४७॥
लक्षयामास स ऋषिश्चिन्तां मुनिसुतस्तदा । ताम्यमानं स मां कृच्छ्रादुवाच परमार्थवित् ॥४८॥
सीदमानो विवृत्ताङ्गोऽचेष्टमानो गतः क्षयम् । संस्तभ्य शोकं धैर्येण स्थिरचित्तो भवाम्यहम् ॥४९॥
ब्रह्महत्याकृतं तापं हृदयादपनीयताम् । न द्विजातिरहं राजन् मा भूत् ते मनसो व्यथा ॥५०॥
शूद्रायामस्मि वैश्येन जातो नरवराधिप । इतीव वदतः कृच्छ्राद् बाणाभिहतमर्मणः ॥५१॥
विघूर्णतो विचेष्टस्य वेपमानस्य भूतले ।
तस्य त्वाताम्यमानस्य तं बाणमहमुद्धरम् । स मामुद्वीक्ष्य संत्रस्तो जहौ प्राणांस्तपोधनः ॥५२॥
जलार्द्रगात्रं तु विलप्य कृच्छ्रं मर्मव्रणं संततमुच्छ्वसन्तम् ।
ततः सरय्वां तमहं शयानं समीक्ष्य भद्रे सुभृशं विषण्णः ॥५३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्रिषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६३ ॥

"While I was going to extract the arrow from his body, the following thought entered my mind : 'With the arrow (still rankling) in his body the hermit boy will (continue to) suffer, even though he will survive, while he will (surely) expire the moment the shaft is removed from his body.' That sage son of a hermit immediately perceived my anxiety, distressed, miserable and stricken with grief as I was. The hermit boy, who knew the essence of the scriptures, spoke with difficulty (as follows) to me, who was feeling perplexed in mind :—(45-48) 'Though getting faint and motionless, with my eyes turned round, since I have approached my end, I am trying to compose my mind, restraining my grief by recourse to firmness. (49) Let agony caused by the thought of your having killed a Brahman be driven from your heart. I am not a Brahman, O king; (hence) let there be no anguish in your mind (on that score). (50) I was procreated by a Vaiśya through a Śūdra woman, O ruler of the foremost of men!' While he was speaking as aforesaid with difficulty, his vital part having been smitten with the arrow, and was now rolling on the ground, now tossing about, now quivering and now fainting, I took out that arrow from his body. Looking dismayed (due to anxiety on the score of his parents) at me, the boy, whose (only) wealth was his asceticism, gave up the ghost. (51-52) I felt extremely sad, O blessed lady, to behold him sighing again and again after speaking out his mind with difficulty, his vital part having been injured, and then lying (dead) on the bank of the Sarayu, drenched all over his body with water." (53)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-three in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुःषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXIV

Daśaratha continues to tell Kausalyā how, having sought the presence of the aged parents of the deceased, he apprised them of the sad incident and escorted them to the river bank, where their son lay dead; how, clasping the boy to their bosom, they both piteously wailed and offered libations of water to his spirit for its benefit; how, invested with an ethereal body, the spirit ascended to heaven while consoling the aged couple and finally how, having cursed the king that he too would meet his death in his agony of separation from his son, the ascetic couple gave up the ghost and attained the Supreme. Having thus related the story of his imprecation and loudly lamenting, the emperor breathes his last with the thought of Śrī Rāma foremost in his mind.

वधमप्रतिरूपं तु महर्षेस्तस्य राघवः । विलपन्नेव धर्मात्मा कौसल्यामिदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
तदज्ञानान्महत्पापं कृत्वा संकुलितेन्द्रियः । एकस्त्वचिन्तयं बुद्ध्या कथं नु सुकृतं भवेत् ॥ २ ॥
ततस्तं घटमादाय पूर्णं परमवारिणा । आश्रमं तमहं प्राप्य यथाख्यातपथं गतः ॥ ३ ॥
तत्राहं दुर्बलावन्धौ वृद्धावपरिणायकौ । अपश्यं तस्य पितरौ लूनपक्षाविव द्विजौ ॥ ४ ॥

तन्निमित्ताभिरासीनौ कथाभिरपरिश्रमौ । तामाशां मत्कृते हीनावुपासीनावनाथवत् ॥ ५ ॥
शोकोपहतचित्तश्च भयसंत्रस्तचेतनः । तच्चाश्रमपदं गत्वा भूयः शोकमहं गतः ॥ ६ ॥
पदशब्दं तु मे श्रुत्वा मुनिर्वाक्यमभाषत । किं चिरायसि मे पुत्र पानीयं क्षिप्रमानय ॥ ७ ॥
यन्निमित्तमिदं तात सलिले क्रीडितं त्वया । उत्कण्ठिता ते मातेयं प्रविश क्षिप्रमाश्रमम् ॥ ८ ॥
यद् व्यलीकं कृतं पुत्र मात्रा ते यदि वा मया । न तन्मनसि कर्तव्यं त्वया तात तपस्विना ॥ ९ ॥
त्वं गतिस्त्वगतीनां च चक्षुस्त्वं हीनचक्षुषाम् । समासक्तास्त्वयि प्राणाः कथं त्वं नाभिभाषसे ॥१०॥
मुनिमव्यक्तया वाचा तमहं सज्जमानया । हीनव्यञ्जनया प्रेक्ष्य भीतचित्त इवाब्रुवम् ॥११॥
मनसः कर्म चेष्टाभिरभिसंस्तभ्य वाग्बलम् । आचचक्षे त्वहं तस्मै पुत्रव्यसनजं भयम् ॥१२॥

Recalling how that great seer was killed undeservedly (by him), the pious-minded Daśaratha (a scion of Raghu) for his part continued to speak as follows to Kausalyā, mourning (all the time for his son):—(1) "Having perpetrated through ignorance that egregious sin, I thought with the help of my reason, my senses being utterly confounded and I being alone, how good luck may yet attend on me. (2) Taking that pitcher (left by the deceased) when it had been filled with excellent water (of the Sarayu), and proceeding along the track (already) pointed out (by the hermit boy), I reached the hermitage referred to by the deceased. (3) There I saw his feeble, blind and aged parents, with none to conduct them here and there and resembling a pair of birds whose wings had been clipped. (4) Remaining occupied with talks concerning their (only) son, they sat free from ennui and like two forlorn persons they (fondly) hugged the hope of meeting their son, though deprived of it through my agency. (5) My intellect being (already) clouded with grief and my mind dismayed through apprehension (of incurring the displeasure of the ascetic couple), I fell a prey to further grief on reaching the site of that hemitage. (6) Hearing my footfalls, the sage for his part spoke as follows:—'Why are you tarrying, my son ? (Pray) bring water immediately. (7) Your mother here is seized with anxiety because, O dear son, you have sported in water (so long); (pray) enter the hermitage without delay. (8) The offence, if any, that may have been given (to you) by your mother or myself my son, should not be taken to heart by you, my child, an ascetic that you are. (9) You are our support, supportless as we are; nay, you are our eyesight, sightless as we are. Our senses are focussed on you. How (then) do you not speak (to me) ?' (10) As though frightened in mind to behold the sage, I replied to him in faltering and inarticulate words lacking in certain consonants. (11) Fully controlling fear (which is an action of the mind) by means of outward signs (showing fearlessness) and acquiring the power of expression, I for my part told him (in the following words) of the fear that awaited him as a result of his son's death. (12)

क्षत्रियोऽहं दशरथो नाहं पुत्रो महात्मनः । सज्जनावमतं दुःखमिदं प्राप्तं स्वकर्मजम् ॥१३॥
भगवंश्चापहस्तोऽहं सरयूतीरमागतः । जिघांसुः श्वापदं किंचिन्निपाने वाऽऽगतं गजम् ॥१४॥
ततः श्रुतो मया शब्दो जले कुम्भस्य पूर्यतः । द्विपोऽयमिति मत्वाहं बाणेनाभिहतो मया ॥१५॥
गत्वा तस्यास्ततस्तीरमपश्यमिषुणा हृदि । विनिर्भिन्नं गतप्राणं शयानं भुवि तापसम् ॥१६॥
ततस्तस्यैव वचनादुपेत्य परितप्यतः । स मया सहसा बाण उद्धृतो मर्मतस्तदा ॥१७॥

स चोद्धृतेन बाणेन सहसा स्वर्गमास्थितः । भगवन्तावुभौ शोचन्नन्धाविति विलप्य च ॥१८॥
अज्ञानाद् भवतः पुत्रः सहसाभिहतो मया । शेषमेवं गते यत् स्यात्तत्प्रसीदतु मे मुनिः ॥१९॥

'I am a Kṣatriya named Daśaratha, and not the son of your exalted self. As a result of my own action this agony, which is despised by noble men, has been reaped by me. (13) Desirous of killing any beast of prey or elephant arrived in a ford (for drinking water), I sought the bank of the Sarayu, bow in hand, O holy sage! (14) Presently was heard by me the sound of a pitcher being filled in water. I stood unsuspecting, believing that it was an elephant (that was making the noise) and the living being (responsible for the sound) was hit by me with an arrow. (15) Proceeding to the bank of the river I immediately found an ascetic lying on the ground with his life (well-nigh) extinct, pierced as he was with the arrow in the heart. (16) Then, drawing near, at the instance of the ascetic himself, who had been suffering intense pain, the said arrow was immediately extracted from his vital part by me. (17) With the arrow extracted (from his bosom) the ascetic forthwith ascended to heaven, grieving for you both, and lamenting on the ground that you were blind. (18) Through ignorance your son has been rashly killed by me. Such being the case, may Your Holiness be pleased to direct what remains to be done.' (19)

स तच्छ्रुत्वा वचः क्रूरं मया तदघशंसिना । नाशकत् तीव्रमायासं स कर्तुं भगवानृषिः ॥२०॥
स बाष्पपूर्णवदनो निःश्वसञ्शोकमूर्च्छितः । मामुवाच महातेजाः कृताञ्जलिमुपस्थितम् ॥२१॥
यद्येतदशुभं कर्म न स्म मे कथयेः स्वयम् । फलेन्मूर्धा स्म ते राजन् सद्यः शतसहस्रधा ॥२२॥
क्षत्रियेण वधो राजन् वानप्रस्थे विशेषतः । ज्ञानपूर्वं कृतः स्थानाच्च्यावयेदपि वज्रिणम् ॥२३॥
सप्तधा तु भवेन्मूर्धा मुनौ तपसि तिष्ठति । ज्ञानाद् विसृजतः शस्त्रं तादृशे ब्रह्मवादिनि ॥२४॥
अज्ञानाद्धि कृतं यस्मादिदं ते तेन जीवसे । अपि ह्यकुशलं न स्याद् राघवाणां कुतो भवान् ॥२५॥
नय नौ नृप तं देशमिति मां चाभ्यभाषत । अद्य तं द्रष्टुमिच्छावः पुत्रं पश्चिमदर्शनम् ॥२६॥
रुधिरेणावसिक्ताङ्गं प्रकीर्णाजिनवाससम् । शयानं भुवि निस्संज्ञं धर्मराजवशं गतम् ॥२७॥

"Hearing that cruel story related by me, who confessed the guilt, the aforesaid sage, though capable of pronouncing a terrible curse, could not do so (my sin having been attenuated by voluntary confession). (20) Stupefied through grief and sighing, his face bathed in tears, the sage, who was exceptionally glorious, replied (as follows) to me, who stood near him with joined palms:—(21) 'Had you not told me of this evil deed yourself, your head, O king, would have instantly split into a hundred or (even) thousand pieces. (22) The death of a hermit wittingly brought about by a Kṣatriya in particular, O king, is sure to bring down even Indra (the wielder of a thunderbolt) from his position. (23) Nay, the head of a man consciously hurling a weapon against such a hermit remaining engaged in austerities and expounding the Vedas is sure to split into seven. (24) Since this sinful deed has been done by you actually through ignorance, therefore you survive. Otherwise the race of the Raghus itself would have become extinct, much more you.' (25) The sage further said to me, 'Take us, O monarch, to that place (where my son is lying dead). We two long today to see that son (of ours)—whom (alas) we are going to see for the last time,—lying unconscious on the ground, transferred to the control of Dharmarāja

(the god of piety, who receives virtuous souls into his realm after death), his (whole) body bathed in blood and his robes of deerskin thrown about." (26-27)

अथाहमेकस्तं देशं नीत्वा तौ भृशदुःखितौ । अस्पर्शयमहं पुत्रं तं मुनिं सह भार्यया ॥२८॥
तौ पुत्रमात्मनः स्पृष्ट्वा तमासाद्य तपस्विनौ । निपेततुः शरीरेऽस्य पिता चैनमुवाच ह ॥२९॥
नाभिवादयसे माद्य न च मामभिभाषसे । किं च शेषे तु भूमौ त्वं वत्स किं कुपितो ह्यसि ॥३०॥
नन्वहं तेऽप्रियः पुत्र मातरं पश्य धार्मिकीम् । किं च नालिङ्गसे पुत्र सुकुमार वचो वद ॥३१॥
कस्य वा पररात्रेऽहं श्रोष्यामि हृदयंगमम् । अधीयानस्य मधुरं शास्त्रं वान्यद् विशेषतः ॥३२॥
को मां संध्यामुपास्यैव स्नात्वा हुतहुताशनः । श्लाघयिष्यत्युपासीनः पुत्रशोकभयार्दितम् ॥३३॥
कन्दमूलफलं हृत्वा यो मां प्रियमिवातिथिम् । भोजयिष्यत्यकर्मण्यमप्रग्रहमनायकम् ॥३४॥
इमामन्धां च वृद्धां च मातरं ते तपस्विनीम् । कथं पुत्र भरिष्यामि कृपणां पुत्रगर्धिनीम् ॥३५॥

"I took the sore afflicted couple to that spot single-handed, and I immediately made that sage with his wife touch his son. (28) Approaching that son of theirs and touching him, the two ascetics fell on his person and the father addressed him (as follows): so the tradition goes:—(29) 'You do not greet me today (as you used to do before) nor do you speak to me. Moreover, why are you actually lying on the ground, my darling ? Are you really displeased (with me)? (30) If I am unwelcome to you, my son, look at your pious mother. Moreover, why do you not embrace her, my tender son ? (Pray) address (loving) words to me. (31) Whose heart-captivating voice shall I hear now in the latter half of the night, reading in particularly sweet tones from any scripture or other sacred book ? (32) Who, having bathed, worshipped Sandhyā (the goddess presiding over the morning twilight) and offered oblations to the sacred fire, and seated by my side, will console me, tormented with grief and fear caused by the death of my son ? (33) Who, having fetched bulbs, roots and fruits, will feed me as one would entertain a beloved guest, unfit as I am for work, resourceless and guideless ? (34) How, my son, shall I (be able to) support this mother of yours, who is not only blind, aged and given to austerities but also miserable and full of longing for her son ? (35)

तिष्ठ मा मा गमः पुत्र यमस्य सदनं प्रति । श्वो मया सह गन्तासि जनन्या च समेधितः ॥३६॥
उभावपि च शोकार्तावनाथौ कृपणौ वने । क्षिप्रमेव गमिष्यावस्त्वया हीनौ यमक्षयम् ॥३७॥
ततो वैवस्वतं दृष्ट्वा तं प्रवक्ष्यामि भारतीम् । क्षमतां धर्मराजो मे बिभृयात् पितरावयम् ॥३८॥
दातुमर्हति धर्मात्मा लोकपालो महायशाः । ईदृशस्य ममाक्षय्यामेकामभयदक्षिणाम् ॥३९॥
अपापोऽसि यथा पुत्र निहतः पापकर्मणा । तेन सत्येन गच्छाशु ये लोकास्त्वस्त्रयोधिनाम् ॥४०॥
यां हि शूरा गतिं यान्ति संग्रामेष्वनिवर्तिनः । हतास्त्वभिमुखाः पुत्र गतिं तां परमां व्रज ॥४१॥
यां गतिं सगरः शैब्यो दिलीपो जनमेजयः । नहुषो धुन्धुमारश्च प्राप्तास्तां गच्छ पुत्रक ॥४२॥
या गतिः सर्वभूतानां स्वाध्यायात् तपसश्च या । भूमिदस्याहिताग्नेश्च एकपत्नीव्रतस्य च ॥४३॥
गोसहस्रप्रदातॄणां गुरुसेवाभृतामपि । देहन्यासकृतां या च तां गतिं गच्छ पुत्रक ॥४४॥
नहि त्वस्मिन् कुले जातो गच्छत्यकुशलां गतिम् । स तु यास्यति येन त्वं निहतो मम बान्धवः ॥४५॥

"Tarry, my son, (pray) do not, O do not (yet) proceed to the abode of Yama (the god of death). Tomorrow you will go with me and accompanied by your mother (too). (36) Stricken with grief, devoid of a supporter and leading a wretched life in the forest, we shall both proceed to Yama's abode without delay, bereft as we are of you. (37) Seeing Yama (son of Vivaswān, the sun-god) I shall then address the (following) prayer to him: 'May King Dharma (the god of piety) be pleased to condone my fault. Let this son (of mine) continue to support us, his parents (as heretofore). (38) A pious-minded and highly illustrious guardian of the world, you ought to vouchsafe in my favour this one imperishable boon and make me fearless (for ever), reduced (as I am) to this plight. (39) Though killed as a result of some sinful act (committed in some previous existence), you are (really) sinless. Therefore, endowed as you are with truthfulness, speedily ascend, my son, to the realms which are attained by those who die fighting with weapons. (40) Reach, my son, that highest destiny to which actually attain heroic warriors never retreating from the fields of battle and killed while facing the enemy. (41) Reach, my dear child, the same goal to which attained Emperors Sagara, Śaibya, Dilīpa, Janamejaya, Nahuṣa and Dhundhumāra. (42) Get merged, my dear son, in the same Brahma which is the goal of all living beings, attainable through study of the Vedas and asceticism, and attain that destiny which is reserved for a donor of land, for him who has maintained the sacred fire (all his life), who has taken a vow of marrying a single wife, those who have gifted a thousand cows, those who are vowed to the service of their preceptor or who have dropped their body (by journeying to the Himalayas or drowning themselves in water or leaping into the flames). (43-44) In fact no one born in this race (of ascetics) can ever meet with an evil destiny (after death). He alone by whom you, my son, have been killed will meet with such a destiny.' (45)

एवं स कृपणं तत्र पर्यदेवयतासकृत् । तथोक्त्वा कर्तुमुदकं प्रवृत्तः सह भार्यया ॥४६॥
स तु दिव्येन रूपेण मुनिपुत्रः स्वकर्मभिः । स्वर्गमध्यारुहत क्षिप्रं शक्रेण सह धर्मवित् ॥४७॥
आबभाषे च तौ वृद्धौ शक्रेण सह तापसः । आश्वस्य च मुहूर्तं तु पितरं वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥४८॥
स्थानमस्मि महत् प्राप्तो भवतोः परिचारणात् । भवन्तावपि च क्षिप्रं मम मूलमुपैष्यथः ॥४९॥
एवमुक्त्वा तु दिव्येन विमानेन वपुष्मता । आरुरोह दिवं क्षिप्रं मुनिपुत्रो जितेन्द्रियः ॥५०॥
स कृत्वाथोदकं तूर्णं तापसः सह भार्यया । मामुवाच महातेजाः कृताञ्जलिमुपस्थितम् ॥५१॥
अद्यैव जहि मां राजन् मरणे नास्ति मे व्यथा । याः शरेणैकपुत्रं मां त्वमकार्षीरपुत्रकम् ॥५२॥
त्वयापि च यदज्ञानान्निहतो मे स बालकः । तेन त्वामपि शप्स्येऽहं सुदुःखमतिदारुणम् ॥५३॥
पुत्रव्यसनजं दुःखं यदेतन्मम साम्प्रतम् । एवं त्वं पुत्रशोकेन राजन् कालं करिष्यसि ॥५४॥
अज्ञानात्तु हतो यस्मात् क्षत्रियेण त्वया मुनिः । तस्मात् त्वां नाविशत्याशु ब्रह्महत्या नराधिप ॥५५॥
त्वामप्येतादृशो भावः क्षिप्रमेव गमिष्यति । जीवितान्तकरो घोरो दातारमिव दक्षिणाम् ॥५६॥

"The ascetic piteously wailed again and again as aforesaid on that spot. Saying so he proceeded with his wife to offer libations of water (to the spirit of his departed son). (46) By virtue of his own (virtuous) deeds, that sage's son, for his part, who knew what is right, immediately ascended in an ethereal form to heaven in the company of Indra (who had evidently come in person drawn by the exceptional merits of the hermit in order to escort him). (47) Nay, the ascetic for his part along with Indra talked with the aged couple and, comforting them awhile, spoke to his father as follows:—(48) 'Through service rendered to you both I have attained an exalted place. You two as well will soon reach my presence.' (49) Having spoken as aforesaid the sage's son, for his part, who had subdued his senses, quickly rose to heaven in a shapely aerial car of heavenly design. (50) Having quickly offered libations of water with his wife, the exceptionally glorious ascetic spoke (as follows) to me, who stood near him with joined palms:—(51) 'Since with one arrow you have rendered me sonless,—me, who had only one son, (pray) kill me (as well) this very day, O king; no agony will be experienced by me in dying. (52) Again, since that boy of mine has been killed by you through ignorance, I shall accordingly pronounce a most painful and very severe curse on you too. (53) As this agony caused by the death of my son is being experienced by me at this moment (through you), you (too) will likewise meet your end through grief born of separation from your son. (54) Since, however, an ascetic has been killed by you, a Kṣatriya, through ignorance, the sin of killing a Brahman is not going to visit you forthwith (as may be expected by you), O ruler of men ! (55) A similar situation that will not only be dreadful but will prove fatal to you will soon confront you (even) as merit accrues to the giver of a donation to the priest.' (56)

एवं शापं मयि न्यस्य विलप्य करुणं बहु । चितामारोप्य देहं तन्मिथुनं स्वर्गमभ्ययात् ॥५७॥
तदेतच्चिन्तयानेन स्मृतं पापं मया स्वयम् । तदा बाल्यात् कृतं देवि शब्दवेध्यनुकर्षिणा ॥५८॥
तस्यायं कर्मणो देवि विपाकः समुपस्थितः । अपथ्यैः सह सम्भुक्ते व्याधिरन्नरसे यथा ॥५९॥
तस्मान्मामागतं भद्रे तस्योदारस्य तद् वचः । इत्युक्त्वा स रुदंस्त्रस्तो भार्यामाह तु भूमिपः ॥६०॥
यदहं पुत्रशोकेन संत्यजिष्यामि जीवितम् । चक्षुर्भ्यां त्वां न पश्यामि कौसल्ये त्वं हि मां स्पृश ॥६१॥
यमक्षयमनुप्राप्ता द्रक्ष्यन्ति नहि मानवाः । यदि मां संस्पृशेद् रामः सकृदन्वारभेत वा ॥६२॥
धनं वा यौवराज्यं वा जीवेयमिति मे मतिः । न तन्मे सदृशं देवि यन्मया राघवे कृतम् ॥६३॥
सदृशं तत्तु तस्यैव यदनेन कृतं मयि । दुर्वृत्तमपि कः पुत्रं त्यजेद् भुवि विचक्षणः ॥६४॥
कश्च प्रव्राज्यमानो वा नासूयेत् पितरं सुतः । चक्षुषा त्वां न पश्यामि स्मृतिर्मम विलुप्यते ॥६५॥
दूता वैवस्वतस्यैते कौसल्ये त्वरयन्ति माम् । अतस्तु किं दुःखतरं यदहं जीवितक्षये ॥६६॥
नहि पश्यामि धर्मज्ञं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ।

"Having pronounced this execration on me and piteously wailing a lot, and throwing their body into the funeral pile the aforesaid couple rose to heaven. (57) The sin committed by me on that occasion through folly by (first discharging and then) extracting an arrow capable of hitting an invisible mark with the help of its sound was automatically recalled by me while brooding over the present predicament, O godly lady ! (58) The (bitter) fruit of that (sinful) deed, O queen ! has now come upon me (even) as illness follows (as a matter of course) in the wake of nutriment taken with zest along with unwholesome (seasoned) articles. (59) Therefore the fruit of the aforesaid imprecation of that great sage has come to me, O blessed lady !". Saying so, the said emperor spoke weeping (again) to his wife (Kausalyā), frightened as he was (at the approach of death in the absence of Śrī Rāma):—(60) "Since I am (soon) going to yield up the ghost out of grief born of separation from my son (Śrī Rāma), I no longer perceive you with my eyes, O Kausalyā ! Therefore touch you me (to convince me of your presence by my side); for men who have reached the threshold of the abode of Yama (the god of death) no longer discern anyone. Should Rāma touch me (only) once or regain my wealth or the office of Prince Regent I might yet survive: such is my belief. The wrong which has been done by me to Rāma (a scion of Raghu) is not becoming of me, O pious lady while the obligation which has been done by him to me (by redeeming my promise and waiving his rightful claim to the throne of Ayodhya) is worthy of him alone. What wise man on earth would forsake a son even of bad morals? And what son when being sent into exile (by his father) would not find fault with his father? I can no longer see you with my eyes (and) my memory (too) is fading. (Nay) these messengers of Yama (son of Vivaswān, the sun-god), are urging me to make haste, O Kausalyā! Really speaking, what can be more painful than the fact that (even) at the end of my life I cannot behold Rāma of unfailing prowess who knows what is right!

तस्यादर्शनजः शोकः सुतस्याप्रतिकर्मणः ॥६७॥
उच्छोषयति वै प्राणान् वारि स्तोकमिवातपः । न ते मनुष्या देवास्ते ये चारुशुभकुण्डलम् ॥६८॥
मुखं द्रक्ष्यन्ति रामस्य वर्षे पञ्चदशे पुनः । पद्मपत्रेक्षणं सुभ्रु सुदंष्ट्रं चारुनासिकम् ॥६९॥
धन्या द्रक्ष्यन्ति रामस्य ताराधिपसमं मुखम् । सदृशं शारदस्येन्दोः फुल्लस्य कमलस्य च ॥७०॥
सुगन्धि मम रामस्य धन्या द्रक्ष्यन्ति ये मुखम् । निवृत्तवनवासं तमयोध्यां पुनरागतम् ॥७१॥
द्रक्ष्यन्ति सुखिनो रामं शुक्रं मार्गगतं यथा । कौसल्ये चित्तमोहेन हृदयं सीदतेतराम् ॥७२॥
वेदये न च संयुक्ताञ्छब्दस्पर्शरसानहम् ।
चित्तनाशाद् विपद्यन्ते सर्वाण्येवेन्द्रियाणि हि । क्षीणस्नेहस्य दीपस्य संरक्ता रश्मयो यथा ॥७३॥
अयमात्मभवः शोको मामनाथमचेतनम् । संसाधयति वेगेन यथा कूलं नदीरयः ॥७४॥
हा राघव महाबाहो हा ममायासनाशन । हा पितृप्रिय मे नाथ हा ममासि गतः सुत ॥७५॥
हा कौसल्ये न पश्यामि हा सुमित्रे तपस्विनि । हा नृशंसे ममामित्रे कैकेयि कुलपांसनि ॥७६॥

"The grief born of my not being able to see my son of incomparable deeds is really drying up my vitality (even) as sunshine dries up meagre water. They who will (be able to) behold again in the fifteenth year Rāma's face with lovely and beautiful ear-rings are not men but gods. Lucky men (alone) will look on the moon-like countenance of Rāma with eyes resembling lotus petals, shapely eyebrows, lovely teeth and a charming nose. Blessed are they who will see the sweet-smelling face of my Rāma, resembling the autumnal moon and a (full-) blown lotus. The happy (alone) will behold the celebrated Rāma returned to Ayodhya on his term of exile having expired, even as people see (with delight) the planet Venus reverted to its (usual) course. Due to obtuseness of mind, O Kausalyā, my heart is sinking, and I have no sensation of sound, touch and taste even when these objects of senses are brought into contact with my senses; for all the senses are obscured as a result of the failure of the mind (even) as the exceedingly luminous rays of a light whose oil has been consumed disappear. (61—73) This grief, which has emanated from my own self, is rendering me helpless and unconscious by its vehemence in the same way as the current of a river wears away its own bank by its rapid motion. (74) Ah mighty-armed scion of Raghu, O reliever of my suffering, O darling of your father, ah my protector. Ah my son, are you (really) gone (out of sight)? (75) Ah Kauśalyā, I can no longer see (with my eyes). Ah Sumitrā, given to austerities! Oh cruel Kaikeyī, my (sworn) enemy, the disgrace of my family!" (76)

इति मातुश्च रामस्य सुमित्रायाश्च संनिधौ । राजा दशरथः शोचञ्जीवितान्तमुपागमत् ॥७७॥
तथा तु दीनः कथयन् नराधिपः प्रियस्य पुत्रस्य विवासनातुरः ।
गतेऽर्धरात्रे भृशदुःखपीडितस्तदा जहौ प्राणमुदारदर्शनः ॥७८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुःषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६४ ॥

Lamenting thus in the presence of Śrī Rāma's mother (Kausalyā) and Sumitrā, King Daśaratha reached the end of his life. (77) Speaking as aforesaid, the king of noble aspect, who was already feeling miserable and distressed on the score of his beloved son's exile, felt sore stricken with agony by the time half the night passed and forthwith gave up the ghost. (78)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-four in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXV

When the emperor did not wake up even though roused by means of panegyrics sung by bards, accompanied by musical instruments played upon for the same purpose, the ladies of the gynaeceum conclude by other means that the king is dead; and soon after commences the loud wail of Kausalyā, Sumitrā and other queens.

अथ रात्र्यां व्यतीतायां प्रातरेवापरेऽहनि । वन्दिनः पर्युपातिष्ठंस्तत्पार्थिवनिवेशनम् ॥ १ ॥
सूताः परमसंस्कारा मागधाश्चोत्तमश्रुताः । गायकाः श्रुतिशीलाश्च निगदन्तः पृथक्पृथक् ॥ २ ॥
राजानं स्तुवतां तेषामुदात्ताभिहिताशिषाम् । प्रासादाभोगविस्तीर्णः स्तुतिशब्दो ह्यवर्तत ॥ ३ ॥
ततस्तु स्तुवतां तेषां सूतानां पाणिवादकाः । अपदानान्युदाहृत्य पाणिवादान्यवादयन् ॥ ४ ॥
तेन शब्देन विहगाः प्रतिबुद्धाश्च सस्वनुः । शाखास्थाः पञ्जरस्थाश्च ये राजकुलगोचराः ॥ ५ ॥
व्याहृताः पुण्यशब्दाश्च वीणानां चापि निःस्वनाः । आशीर्गेयं च गाथानां पूरयामास वेश्म तत् ॥ ६ ॥

When the night had ended, there arrived forthwith at the residence of the aforesaid emperor early next morning panegyrists, highly cultured minstrels and bards whose information (about genealogical tables etc.) was of a superior kind, as well as singers capable of distinguishing the difference in the tones of a Vina etc. and singing according to their different styles. (1-2) The sound of the praises uttered by the aforesaid bards and others, who were glorifying the king and by whom benedictions were pronounced in a loud voice, actually pervaded the interior of the palaces (in the form of echo). (3) While the aforesaid minstrels for their part were (engaged in) uttering praises, those who sang with the clapping of hands thereupon clapped their hands recounting the marvellous feats of the rulers of Ayodhya. (4) Nay, roused by that sound (of clapping), birds appearing in the royal palace and perched on the boughs of trees as well as confined in a cage uttered forth their notes. (5) The holy words uttered (by the Brahmans and parrots etc.) as well as the notes of Vina and the benedictory portion, set to music, of epic verses (composed by Brahmans in praise of the king) filled that palace. (6)

ततः शुचिसमाचाराः पर्युपस्थानकोविदाः । स्त्रीवर्षवरभूयिष्ठा उपतस्थुर्यथा पुरा ॥ ७ ॥
हरिचन्दनसम्पृक्तमुदकं काञ्चनैर्घटैः । आनिन्युः स्नानशिक्षाज्ञा यथाकालं यथाविधि ॥ ८ ॥
मङ्गलालम्भनीयानि प्राशनीयान्युपस्करान् । उपानिन्युस्तथा पुण्याः कुमारीबहुलाः स्त्रियः ॥ ९ ॥
सर्वलक्षणसम्पन्नं सर्वं विधिवदर्चितम् । सर्वं सुगुणलक्ष्मीवत् तदभूदाभिहारिकम् ॥१०॥
ततः सूर्योदयं यावत् सर्वं परिसमुत्सुकम् । तस्थावनुपसम्प्राप्तं किंस्विदित्युपशङ्कितम् ॥११॥

Then attendants, mostly consisting of women and eunuchs, of unimpeachable conduct and proficient in service, stood ready to serve as usual. (7) Servants who knew how to conduct the bath (of emperors) brought at the appropriate hour and in the prescribed manner water scented with sandal paste in pitchers of gold. (8) Virtuous women, largely consisting of virgins (whose very sight is believed to be propitious), likewise brought cows etc. (whose very touch is considered to be auspicious), articles worth sipping the first thing (*viz*, the water of the holy Ganga, water in which the feet of a deity have been washed and so on) and articles of dress, toilet etc. (9) All that was worth bringing (within the sight of the emperor at the time of his waking for his good luck) and was endowed with all auspicious characteristics and all that was praiseworthy, of excellent quality and possessed of charm was kept (ready) in accordance with the scriptural ordinance. (10) Till sunrise all the king's retinue stood immensely eager (to see the king) and apprehensive as to what (mishap) had befallen the king, who had not yet come out (of the gynaeceum). (11)

अथ याः कोसलेन्द्रस्य शयनं प्रत्यनन्तराः । ताः स्त्रियस्तु समागम्य भर्तारं प्रत्यबोधयन् ॥१२॥
अथाप्युचितवृत्तास्ता विनयेन नयेन च । नह्यस्य शयनं स्पृष्ट्वा किंचिदप्युपलेभिरे ॥१३॥
ताः स्त्रियः स्वप्नशीलज्ञाश्चेष्टां संचलनादिषु । ता वेपथुपरीताश्च राज्ञः प्राणेषु शङ्किताः ॥१४॥
प्रतिस्रोतस्तृणाग्राणां सदृशं संचकाशिरे ।
अथ संदेहमानानां स्त्रीणां दृष्ट्वा च पार्थिवम् । यत् तदाशङ्कितं पापं तदा जज्ञे विनिश्चयः ॥१५॥
कौसल्या च सुमित्रा च पुत्रशोकपराजिते । प्रसुप्ते न प्रबुध्येते यथा कालसमन्विते ॥१६॥
निष्प्रभासा विवर्णा च सन्ना शोकेन संनता । न व्यराजत कौसल्या तारेव तिमिरावृता ॥१७॥
कौसल्यानन्तरं राज्ञः सुमित्रा तदनन्तरम् । न स्म विभ्राजते देवी शोकाश्रुलुलितानना ॥१८॥

Now approaching their consort, those ladies (other than Kausalyā and the other principal queens), for their part, who were close to the couch of the king of Kosala, began to rouse him (by calling him in gentle and polite words and touching his person). (12) Nevertheless, on touching his couch with reverence and skill, the ladies, whose behaviour (on the occasion) was (perfectly) justifiable, could not detect any sign of life whatsoever (in him). (13) Those ladies, who knew the condition of a body in slumber, did not discover any throbbing in the heart, the pulse and other organs. They were (accordingly) seized with tremor, apprehensive as they were about the king's life, and looked (unsteady) like the ends of reeds standing against a stream. Now on seeing (the condition of) the emperor at that time a certainty rose in the mind of the doubting ladies about the disaster (in the form of death) which was apprehended. (14-15) Being fast asleep, Kausalyā and Sumitrā too, who had been prostrated with grief caused by separation from their sons, would not wake up as though they had been overtaken by death. (16) Shorn of splendour and divested of her (native) colour, (nay) stricken and laid prostrate with grief, Kausalyā did not shine brightly (as before) any more than a star engulfed in darkness. (17) Laying (asleep) close to the king (who was now dead and therefore pale) Kausalyā too did not shine brightly (any more than the king) nor did Queen Sumitrā, who lay asleep next to Kausalyā, and whose face was bathed in tears of grief. (18)

ते च दृष्ट्वा तदा सुप्ते उभे देव्यौ च तं नृपम् । सुप्तमेवोद्गतप्राणमन्तःपुरममन्यत ॥१९॥
ततः प्रचुक्रुशुर्दीनाः सस्वरं ता वराङ्गनाः । करेणव इवारण्ये स्थानप्रच्युतयूथपाः ॥२०॥
तासामाक्रन्दशब्देन सहसोद्गतचेतने । कौसल्या च सुमित्रा च त्यक्तनिद्रे बभूवतुः ॥२१॥
कौसल्या च सुमित्रा च दृष्ट्वा स्पृष्ट्वा च पार्थिवम् । हा नाथेति परिक्रुश्य पेततुर्धरणीतले ॥२२॥
सा कोसलेन्द्रदुहिता चेष्टमाना महीतले । न भ्राजते रजोध्वस्ता तारेव गगनच्युता ॥२३॥

Seeing both the aforesaid queens (Kausalyā and Sumitrā), asleep at that time, (the inmates of) the gynaeceum concluded that King Daśaratha had breathed his last while asleep. (19) Then those pretty women loudly wailed, afflicted as they were, like female elephants in a forest, the leader of whose herd had strayed away from their abode. (20) Roused all of a sudden by the noise of their wailing, Kausalyā and Sumitrā too shook off their slumber. (21) Looking at the emperor and touching him and crying loudly "Ah my lord!" Kausalyā and Sumitrā too dropped to the ground. (22) Tossing on the floor and covered with dust, that daughter of the ruler of Kosala (a principality of that name to the south of the kingdom of Kosala and later merged in it) did not look charming any more than a (shooting) star fallen from the heavens. (23)

नृपे शान्तगुणे जाते कौसल्यां पतितां भुवि । अपश्यंस्ताः स्त्रियः सर्वा हतां नागवधूमिव ॥२४॥
ततः सर्वा नरेन्द्रस्य कैकेयीप्रमुखाः स्त्रियः । रुदत्यः शोकसंतप्ता निपेतुर्गतचेतनाः ॥२५॥
ताभिः स बलवान् नादः क्रोशन्तीभिरनुद्रुतः । येन स्फीतीकृतो भूयस्तद् गृहं समनादयत् ॥२६॥
तत् परित्रस्तसम्भ्रान्तपर्युत्सुकजनाकुलम् । सर्वतस्तुमुलाक्रन्दं परितापार्तबान्धवम् ॥२७॥
सद्योनिपतितानन्दं दीनं विक्लवदर्शनम् । बभूव नरदेवस्य सद्म दिष्टान्तमीयुषः ॥२८॥
अतीतमाज्ञाय तु पार्थिवर्षभं यशस्विनं तं परिवार्य पत्नयः ।
भृशं रुदत्यः करुणं सुदुःखिताः प्रगृह्य बाहू व्यलपन्ननाथवत् ॥२९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६५ ॥

The king having expired, all those ladies beheld Kausalyā fallen on the ground like the dead wife of a Nāga (a semi-divine being credited with a human face with serpent-like lower extremities). (24) Then the king's wives, Kaikeyī and others, who were all weeping, sore stricken with grief as they were, fell down, consciousness having departed (from them). (25) That powerful noise (already heard in the gynaeceum) was supplemented by those wailing ladies (by means of their own lamentation), swollen by which it rendered the house all the more noisy. (26) That gynaeceum of the king, who had (now) met his appointed end, was thronged with men and women who felt greatly alarmed, flurried and over-excited, was filled with a tumultuous wail on all sides and crowded with (the king's) relations who were stricken with deep agony. Joy had suddenly disappeared from it and it wore a miserable aspect and presented a perplexed appearance. (27-28) Concluding the illustrious Daśaratha (the foremost of kings) to be deceased and surrounding him on all sides, his consorts, for their part, who were profusely shedding tears, greatly afflicted as they were, piteously wailed like helpless women, clasping his arms. (29)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-five in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षट्षष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXVI

Resting the head of the lifeless monarch in her own lap and severely reproaching Kaikeyī, Kausalyā grievously mourns for Śrī Rāma and other exiles. Holding back Kausalyā,—who was lamenting with her arms placed round her deceased husband's bosom,—and consigning the emperor's dead body to a trough filled with oil, the ministers and other functionaries return each to his own abode in the evening.

तमग्निमिव संशान्तमम्बुहीनमिवार्णवम् । गतप्रभमिवादित्यं स्वर्गस्थं प्रेक्ष्य भूमिपम् ॥ १ ॥
कौसल्या बाष्पपूर्णाक्षी विविधं शोककर्शिता । उपगृह्य शिरो राज्ञः कैकेयीं प्रत्यभाषत ॥ २ ॥
सकामा भव कैकेयि भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यमकण्टकम् । त्यक्त्वा राजानमेकाग्रा नृशंसे दुष्टचारिणि ॥ ३ ॥
विहाय मां गतो रामो भर्ता च स्वर्गतो मम । विपथे सार्थहीनेव नाहं जीवितुमुत्सहे ॥ ४ ॥
भर्तारं तु परित्यज्य का स्त्री दैवतमात्मनः । इच्छेज्जीवितुमन्यत्र कैकेय्यास्त्यक्तधर्मणः ॥ ५ ॥
न लुब्धो बुध्यते दोषान् किम्पाकमिव भक्षयन् । कुब्जानिमित्तं कैकेय्या राघवाणां कुलं हतम् ॥ ६ ॥

Beholding the aforesaid emperor, whose spirit was (now) in heaven, and who looked like a fully extinguished fire, a waterless ocean and a lustreless sun, and clasping the king's head, Kausalyā, who was stricken with grief in diverse ways, spoke (as follows) to Kaikeyī, her eyes full of tears:—(1-2) "Having your desire fulfilled), O cruel Kaikeyī, be satisfied. Having done with the king, O woman of evil conduct, confidently enjoy the throne, which has no more enemies. (3) Forsaking me, Rāma has departed (for the forest), while my husband has ascended to heaven. (As such) I cannot live any longer than a woman bereft of her companions on a perilous road. (4) Truly speaking, what woman, other than Kaikeyī, who has cast (all) piety to the winds, would survive leaving her husband, a (veritable) god to her? (5) A greedy man does not cognize his own faults any more than he who partakes of a forbidden dish. The race of the Raghus has been destroyed by Kaikeyī at the instigation of Mantharā (a hunch-backed woman). (6)

अनियोगे नियुक्तेन राज्ञा रामं विवासितम् । सभार्यं जनकः श्रुत्वा परितप्स्यत्यहं यथा ॥ ७ ॥
स मामनाथां विधवां नाद्य जानाति धार्मिकः । रामः कमलपत्राक्षो जीवन्नाशमितो गतः ॥ ८ ॥
विदेहराजस्य सुता तथा चारुतपस्विनी । दुःखस्यानुचिता दुःखं वने पर्युद्विजिष्यति ॥ ९ ॥
नदतां भीमघोषाणां निशासु मृगपक्षिणाम् । निशम्य नादं संत्रस्ता राघवं संश्रयिष्यति ॥१०॥
वृद्धश्चैवाल्पपुत्रश्च वैदेहीमनुचिन्तयन् । सोऽपि शोकसमाविष्टो नूनं त्यक्ष्यति जीवितम् ॥११॥
साहमद्यैव दिष्टान्तं गमिष्यामि पतिव्रता । इदं शरीरमालिङ्ग्य प्रवेक्ष्यामि हुताशनम् ॥१२॥

"Hearing of Rāma having been exiled with his consort (Sītā) by the king as urged (by Kaikeyī) to an unbecoming act, King Janaka (too) will feel greatly perturbed as I do. (7) That pious Rāma, who is possessed of eyes resembling lotus petals and who has disappeared from this place even though living, does not know me to have been deprived of my master and husband today. (8) The daughter of Janaka (the ruler of the Videha territory), who is engaged in agreeable austerities (in the shape of service to her exiled husband living in a forest) and is undeserving of suffering, will feel sorely afflicted in the forest. (9) Greatly alarmed to hear during the nights the noise of howling (wild) beasts and birds possessing the habit of uttering a fearful cry, she will cling (in terror) to Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (10) Anxiously thinking again and again of Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory), and overwhelmed with grief, Janaka too, who is aged and who has few issues (*viz*, a daughter named Urmilā, wife of Lakṣmaṇa and a god-daughter in the person of Sītā), will surely give up the ghost. (11) I (too), devoted as I am to my husband, shall accordingly meet my destined end this very day. (Nay) embracing this body (of my husband), I shall enter the fire (that will be prepared for his funeral)." (12)

तां ततः सम्परिष्वज्य विलपन्तीं तपस्विनीम् । व्यपनिन्युः सुदुःखार्तां कौसल्यां व्यावहारिकाः ॥१३॥
तैलद्रोण्यां तदाऽऽमात्याः संवेश्य जगतीपतिम् । राज्ञः सर्वाण्यथादिष्टाश्चक्रुः कर्माण्यनन्तरम् ॥१४॥
न तु संकालनं राज्ञो विना पुत्रेण मन्त्रिणः । सर्वज्ञाः कर्तुमीषुस्ते ततो रक्षन्ति भूमिपम् ॥१५॥
तैलद्रोण्यां शायितं तं सचिवैस्तु नराधिपम् । हा मृतोऽयमिति ज्ञात्वा स्त्रियस्ताः पर्यदेवयन् ॥१६॥
बाहूनुच्छ्रित्य कृपणा नेत्रप्रस्रवणैर्मुखैः । रुदत्यः शोकसंतप्ताः कृपणं पर्यदेवयन् ॥१७॥

The ministers (*lit.*, functionaries entrusted with the work of disposing of the king's dead body) then reverently removed (from that place) the wretched Kausalyā, who was sore stricken with agony and lamented holding the (dead) monarch in close embrace. (13) Consigning the (deceased) emperor at that time to a trough filled with oil, the ministers as commanded (by Vasiṣṭha and other family priests) then performed all the duties (connected with the preservation of the king's dead body etc.) required to be done next. (14) Knowing (as they did) everything (connected with the disposal of the dead body), the aforesaid counsellors would not of course perform the king's funeral without (the presence of) a son; hence they preserved the body of the king. (15) Coming to know of the king having been laid by the ministers in the trough filled with oil, the aforesaid ladies lamented exclaiming as follows :— "Ah, the king is dead !" (16) Throwing up their arms, the wretched ladies, crying with their faces containing cascades in the form of eyes, sore stricken with grief (as they were), piteously wailed (as follows):—(17)

हा महाराज रामेण संततं प्रियवादिना । विहीनाः सत्यसंधेन किमर्थं विजहासि नः ॥१८॥
कैकेय्या दुष्टभावायां राघवेण विवर्जिताः । कथं सपत्न्या वत्स्यामः समीपे विधवा वयम् ॥१९॥
स हि नाथः स चास्माकं तव च प्रभुरात्मवान् । वनं रामो गतः श्रीमान् विहाय नृपतिश्रियम् ॥२०॥
त्वया तेन च वीरेण विना व्यसनमोहिताः । कथं वयं निवत्स्यामः कैकेय्या च विदूषिताः ॥२१॥
यया च राजा रामश्च लक्ष्मणश्च महाबलः । सीतया सह संत्यक्ताः सा कमन्यं न हास्यति ॥२२॥

"Ah, wherefore, O emperor, do you abandon us, (already) bereft of Rāma of unfailing promise, who ever speaks kindly (to all)? (18) Forsaken by Rāma and deprived of our husband, how shall we live in proximity to our co-wife, Kaikeyī, of wicked intention? (19) That glorious Rāma was indeed our protector and lord as well as of yours, self-controlled as he is. Having relinquished the royal fortune, he has departed for the forest. (20) Nonplussed through adversity and treated disrespectfully by Kaikeyī, how shall we live without you and that heroic prince? (21) Whom else will she,—by whom have been abandoned the king as well as Rāma and the very mighty Lakṣmaṇa with Sītā,—not abandon?" (22)

ता बाष्पेण च संवीताः शोकेन विपुलेन च । व्यचेष्टन्त निरानन्दा राघवस्य वरस्त्रियः ॥२३॥
निशा नक्षत्रहीनेव स्त्रीव भर्तृविवर्जिता । पुरी नाराजतायोध्या हीना राज्ञा महात्मना ॥२४॥
बाष्पपर्याकुलजना हाहाभूतकुलाङ्गना । शून्यचत्वरवेश्मान्ता न बभ्राज यथापुरम् ॥२५॥
गते तु शोकात् त्रिदिवं नराधिपे महीतलस्थासु नृपाङ्गनासु च ।
निवृत्तचारः सहसा गतो रविः प्रवृत्तचारा रजनी ह्युपस्थिता ॥२६॥
ऋते तु पुत्राद् दहनं महीपतेर्नारोचयंस्ते सुहृदः समागताः ।
इतीव तस्मिञ्शयने न्यवेशयन् विचिन्त्य राजानमचिन्त्यदर्शनम् ॥२७॥
गतप्रभा द्यौरिव भास्करं विना व्यपेतनक्षत्रगणेव शर्वरी ।
पुरी बभासे रहिता महात्मना कण्ठास्रकण्ठाकुलमार्गचत्वरा ॥२८॥
नराश्च नार्यश्च समेत्य संघशो विगर्हमाणा भरतस्य मातरम् ।
तदा नगर्यां नरदेवसंक्षये बभूवुरार्ता न च शर्म लेभिरे ॥२९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षट्षष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६६ ॥

Bathed in tears and seized with enormous grief, those charming consorts of Daśaratha (a scion of Raghu) tossed about (on the ground), divested of joy as they were. (23) Bereft of its high-souled ruler (King Daśaratha), the city of Ayodhya did not shine any more than a night without stars or a woman deprived of her husband. (24) With its men bathed in tears and women of high pedigree raising a cry of distress, and its cross-roads and entrances of houses looking desolate, the city did not look charming as before. (25) The king for his part having departed for heaven due to grief (caused by separation from his sons and daughter-in-law) and the king's consorts tossing on the floor, the sun suddenly disappeared (below the horizon), its rays having ceased to be diffused, and the night actually fell, darkness having commenced to spread. (26) Those friends and relations of the emperor that stood assembled (on the occasion) did not favour his cremation in the absence of a son. Therefore, considering the king as having assumed an appearance beyond conception, they laid the king in that trough (which served as his bed). (27) Bereft of Daśaratha (an exalted soul), the city with its roads and cross-roads full of men whose throats were choked with tears that ran past their throats, looked like the firmament shorn of splendour in the absence of the sun and (further) resembled a night with its host of stars gone out of sight. (28) Coming together in batches and reproaching Bharata's mother, men and women in the city felt distressed at that time on the king's demise and found no rest. (29)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-six in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXVII

Attributing the rise and fall of a kingdom to the presence and disappearance of its ruler, Mārkaṇḍeya and other great sages, who attended the king's court the following day, urge Vasiṣṭha to install any of the princes on the throne immediately.

आक्रन्दिता निरानन्दा सास्रकण्ठजनाविला । अयोध्यायामवतता सा व्यतीयाय शर्वरी ॥ १ ॥
व्यतीतायां तु शर्वर्यामादित्यस्योदये ततः । समेत्य राजकर्तारः सभामीयुर्द्विजातयः ॥ २ ॥
मार्कण्डेयोऽथ मौद्गल्यो वामदेवश्च कश्यपः । कात्यायनो गौतमश्च जाबालिश्च महायशाः ॥ ३ ॥
एते द्विजाः सहामात्यैः पृथग्वाचमुदीरयन् । वसिष्ठमेवाभिमुखाः श्रेष्ठं राजपुरोहितम् ॥ ४ ॥
अतीता शर्वरी दुःखं या नो वर्षशतोपमा । अस्मिन् पञ्चत्वमापन्ने पुत्रशोकेन पार्थिवे ॥ ५ ॥
स्वर्गस्थश्च महाराजो रामश्चारण्यमाश्रितः । लक्ष्मणश्चापि तेजस्वी रामेणैव गतः सह ॥ ६ ॥
उभौ भरतशत्रुघ्नौ केकयेषु परंतपौ । पुरे राजगृहे रम्ये मातामहनिवेशने ॥ ७ ॥
इक्ष्वाकूणामिहाद्यैव कश्चिद् राजा विधीयताम् । अराजकं हि नो राष्ट्रं विनाशं समवाप्नुयात् ॥ ८ ॥

That night, which was full of laments and shorn of joy and (therefore) appeared long and was thronged with crowds of tearful men, in Ayodhya came to an end. (1) Coming together at sunrise, when the night had ended, Brahmans who carried on all the duties of a king (during the interregnum) arrived for their part at the court. (2) Seated with their faces turned towards Vasiṣṭha alone, the arch-priest of the royal family, Mārkaṇḍeya and Maudgalya, Vāmadeva and Kaśyapa, Kātyāyana and Gautama, as well as Jābāli, who enjoyed great fame, these Brahmans along with the ministers separately made speeches (the substance of which is given below:—) (3-4) "The yonder king having met his end due to grief born of separation from his sons (Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), the night, which weighed upon us like a hundred years, has ended with difficulty. (5) Not only is the emperor away in heaven but Śrī Rāma too has taken up his abode in the forest. Nay, the powerful Lakṣmaṇa too has left with the same Śrī Rāma. (6) Both Bharata and Śatrughna, who are capable of chastising the enemy, are in the lovely palace of their maternal grandfather at his capital, Rājagṛha, in the Kekaya kingdom. (7) Someone among the sons of Daśaratha (who are scions of Ikṣwāku) should be crowned king this very day; for without a ruler our state (of Kosala) may meet with ruin. (8)

नाराजके जनपदे विद्युन्माली महास्वनः । अभिवर्षति पर्जन्यो महीं दिव्येन वारिणा ॥ ९ ॥
नाराजके जनपदे बीजमुष्टिः प्रकीर्यते । नाराजके पितुः पुत्रो भार्या वा वर्तते वशे ॥१०॥
अराजके धनं नास्ति नास्ति भार्याप्यराजके । इदमत्याहितं चान्यत् कुतः सत्यमराजके ॥११॥
नाराजके जनपदे कारयन्ति सभां नराः । उद्यानानि च रम्याणि हृष्टाः पुण्यगृहाणि च ॥१२॥
नाराजके जनपदे यज्ञशीला द्विजातयः । सत्राण्यन्वासते दान्ता ब्राह्मणाः संशितव्रताः ॥१३॥
नाराजके जनपदे महायज्ञेषु यज्वनः । ब्राह्मणा वसुसम्पूर्णा विसृजन्त्याप्तदक्षिणाः ॥१४॥
नाराजके जनपदे प्रहृष्टनटनर्तकाः । उत्सवाश्च समाजाश्च वर्धन्ते राष्ट्रवर्धनाः ॥१५॥
नाराजके जनपदे सिद्धार्था व्यवहारिणः । कथाभिरभिरज्यन्ते कथाशीलाः कथाप्रियैः ॥१६॥
नाराजके जनपदे तूद्यानानि समागताः । सायाह्ने क्रीडितुं यान्ति कुमार्यो हेमभूषिताः ॥१७॥
नाराजके जनपदे धनवन्तः सुरक्षिताः । शेरते विवृतद्वाराः कृषिगोरक्षजीविनः ॥१८॥

"In a land destitute of a ruler the thundering cloud wreathed with lightning does not drench the earth with rain water. (9) In a rulerless land handfuls of seeds are no longer scattered (for fear of uncertainty of crops). (Nay) in a rulerless land a son is not amenable to the control of his father nor is a wife amenable to the control of her husband (there being no executive authority to enforce correct conduct). (10) In a rulerless land there is no personal property (in the absence of a protector) nor is there a (faithful) wife in a rulerless land (there being no law to check adultery). There is this great risk in a rulerless territory. How can any other form of truthfulness (virtue) prevail ? (11) In a rulerless land, people do not construct assembly halls (for public gatherings, there being no such gatherings) nor do joyous men plant lovely gardens (for fear of their being destroyed by enemies of peace and order) or build sacred houses (such as temples and buildings for the free accommodation of travellers and strangers etc.). (12) In a rulerless land the twice-born (other than Brahmans, *viz*, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas) given to the performance of sacrifices and self-controlled Brahmans observing austere vows do not undertake sacrificial performances in which everyone participating in it is both an officiating priest and a sacrificer. (13) In a rulerless land (even) Brahmans richly endowed with wealth do not pay handsome sacrificial fees to the priests officiating (even) at big sacrificial performances (wherever such performances are undertaken, lest they may be taken for rich men and looted by brigands). (14) In a rulerless land festivals (in honour of deities) in which actors and dancers exhibit their art in a highly ecstatic mood, and convivial gatherings promoting the welfare of the state do not gather strength. (15) In a rulerless land parties to a law-suit are not able to have their dispute settled, nor are those given to hearing stories from the Purāṇas etc. pleased with such stories told by those to whom the narration of such stories is agreeable. (16) In a rulerless land virgins decked with gold ornaments do not for their part go united to gardens to sport at dusk (for fear of being abducted or violated by miscreants). (17) In a rulerless land wealthy husband men and cowherds, even though well protected (by their attendants) do not sleep with open doors (for fear of burglars and dacoits). (18)

नाराजके जनपदे वाहनैः शीघ्रवाहिभिः । नरा निर्यान्त्यरण्यानि नारीभिः सह कामिनः ॥१९॥
नाराजके जनपदे बद्धघण्टा विषाणिनः । अटन्ति राजमार्गेषु कुञ्जराः षष्टिहायनाः ॥२०॥

नाराजके जनपदे शरान् संततमस्यताम् । श्रूयते तलनिर्घोष इष्वस्त्राणामुपासने ॥२१॥
नाराजके जनपदे वणिजो दूरगामिनः । गच्छन्ति क्षेममध्वानं बहुपण्यसमाचिताः ॥२२॥
नाराजके जनपदे चरत्येकचरो वशी । भावयन्नात्मनाऽऽत्मानं यत्र सायंगृहो मुनिः ॥२३॥
नाराजके जनपदे योगक्षेमः प्रवर्तते । न चाप्यराजके सेना शत्रून् विषहते युधि ॥२४॥
नाराजके जनपदे हृष्टैः परमवाजिभिः । नराः संयान्ति सहसा रथैश्च प्रतिमण्डिताः ॥२५॥
नाराजके जनपदे नराः शास्त्रविशारदाः । संवदन्तोपतिष्ठन्ते वनेषूपवनेषु वा ॥२६॥
नाराजके जनपदे माल्यमोदकदक्षिणाः । देवताभ्यर्चनार्थाय कल्प्यन्ते नियतैर्जनैः ॥२७॥
नाराजके जनपदे चन्दनागुरुरूषिताः । राजपुत्रा विराजन्ते वसन्त इव शाखिनः ॥२८॥

"In a rulerless land lustful men do not drive in swift-going conveyances with women to pleasure-groves (for enjoying the forest scenery). (19) In a rulerless land sixty-year-old (army) tuskers do not (for fear of being deprived of their tusks or bells) move about on the main roads with bells fastened to their girths. (20) In a rulerless land the sound of plucking the bow-string with the palm produced by Kṣatriyas uninterruptedly discharging arrows while practising the use of bows is not heard. (21) In a rulerless land merchants travelling far and wide do not safely move about fully equipped with abundant salable goods. (22) In a rulerless land self-controlled ascetics moving all by themselves and contemplating on the Self with their own mind and taking up their abode wherever the evening falls do not move about (freely for want of hospitable householders). (23) In a rulerless land there is no acquisition of property and no security of possessions. Nor is the army able in a rulerless land to vanquish the foes in a battle. (24) In a rulerless land people do not quickly move out decked with ornaments in chariots driven by spirited horses of excellent breed. (25) In a rulerless land men well-versed in sacred lore do not meet (freely) holding disputations in forests and groves. (26) In a rulerless land flowers, sweetmeats and sacrificial fees are not got together for the worship of deities by self-controlled men. (27) In a rulerless land princes smeared with paste of sandal and aloe wood do not figure prominently as trees in the vernal season. (28)

यथा ह्यनुदका नद्यो यथा वाप्यतृणं वनम् । अगोपाला यथा गावस्तथा राष्ट्रमराजकम् ॥२९॥
ध्वजो रथस्य प्रज्ञानं धूमो ज्ञानं विभावसोः । तेषां यो नो ध्वजो राजा स देवत्वमितो गतः ॥३०॥
नाराजके जनपदे स्वकं भवति कस्यचित् । मत्स्या इव जना नित्यं भक्षयन्ति परस्परम् ॥३१॥
ये हि सम्भिन्नमर्यादा नास्तिकाश्छिन्नसंशयाः । तेऽपि भावाय कल्पन्ते राजदण्डनिपीडिताः ॥३२॥
यथा दृष्टिः शरीरस्य नित्यमेव प्रवर्तते । तथा नरेन्द्रो राष्ट्रस्य प्रभवः सत्यधर्मयोः ॥३३॥
राजा सत्यं च धर्मश्च राजा कुलवतां कुलम् । राजा माता पिता चैव राजा हितकरो नृणाम् ॥३४॥
यमो वैश्रवणः शक्रो वरुणश्च महाबलः । विशिष्यन्ते नरेन्द्रेण वृत्तेन महता ततः ॥३५॥
अहो तम इवेदं स्यान्न प्रज्ञायेत किंचन । राजा चेन्न भवेल्लोके विभजन् साध्वसाधुनी ॥३६॥
जीवत्यपि महाराजे तवैव वचनं वयम् । नातिक्रमामहे सर्वे वेलां प्राप्येव सागरः ॥३७॥
स नः समीक्ष्य द्विजवर्य वृत्तं नृपं विना राष्ट्रमरण्यभूतम् ।
कुमारमिक्ष्वाकुसुतं तथान्यं त्वमेव राजानमिहाभिषेचय ॥३८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्तषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६७ ॥

"A state without a ruler is really no better than rivers without water, a woodland without grass and cows without a keeper. (29) A standard is the distinguishing mark of a chariot, while smoke is a testimony to (the presence of) fire. King Daśaratha, who (likewise) brought us, counsellors, into prominence (by bestowing this honour on us) has passed from the human state to the state of gods. (30) In a rulerless land nothing is one's own in the eyes of anyone. Like fishes men always devour one another. (31) (In the absence of a stable government) even those who do not believe in life after death and have flagrantly violated the rules of conduct prescribed by the Vedas and who have (consequently) been tormented with punishment inflicted by the king and whose fear (of punishment) has (now) been dispelled (by the anarchy prevailing at the time) are able to exercise authority (over others). (32) (Just) as the eye ever strives for the good of the body (by serving as a guide to it and showing it the right path), so does the king, who is the fountain of truth and righteousness, ever strive for the good of the state. (33) The king is truthfulness and virtue (incarnate); the king constitutes the nobility of birth in men of a high pedigree. The king is the mother as well as the father; the king is the benefactor of men. (34) (Even) Yama (the god of retribution), Kubera (son of Viśravā, the god of riches), Indra (the ruler of gods) and the very mighty Varuṇa (the deity presiding over water) are outstripped by a king of excellent conduct by virtue of such conduct (inasmuch as he combines in himself the virtues of all the above-named deities). (35) If there is no king demarcating good and evil in the world, oh, this world will be reduced to (utter) darkness as it were and nothing can be clearly perceived. (36) Even while the emperor was alive, we all never violated your command only any more than the oceans overstep the coastline on reaching it. (37) Therefore, fully considering our (past) conduct (which has ever been loyal to the king and devoted to the best interests of the state) and looking on the state, which has been converted into a (veritable) jungle for want of a king, crown you alone as king on this throne any prince who is a scion of Ikṣwāku, or anyone else, O jewel among the Brahmans !" (38)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-seven in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टषष्टितमः सर्गः

Canto LXVIII

With the concurrence of Mārkaṇḍeya and other sages, Vasiṣṭha despatches messengers to call back Bharata and Śatrughna from their maternal grandfather's. They leave forthwith for the capital of Kekaya and quickly enter that city.

तेषां तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा वसिष्ठः प्रत्युवाच ह । मित्रामात्यजनान् सर्वान् ब्राह्मणांस्तानिदं वचः ॥ १ ॥
यदसौ मातुलकुले दत्तराज्यः परं सुखी । भरतो वसति भ्रात्रा शत्रुघ्नेन मुदान्वितः ॥ २ ॥
तच्छीघ्रं जवना दूता गच्छन्तु त्वरितं हयैः । आनेतुं भ्रातरौ वीरौ किं समीक्षामहे वयम् ॥ ३ ॥

गच्छन्त्विति ततः सर्वे वसिष्ठं वाक्यमब्रुवन् । तेषां तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा वसिष्ठो वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥ ४ ॥
एहि सिद्धार्थ विजय जयन्ताशोक नन्दन । श्रूयतामितिकर्तव्यं सर्वानेव ब्रवीमि वः ॥ ५ ॥
पुरं राजगृहं गत्वा शीघ्रं शीघ्रजवैर्हयैः । त्यक्तशोकैरिदं वाच्यः शासनाद् भरतो मम ॥ ६ ॥
पुरोहितस्त्वां कुशलं प्राह सर्वे च मन्त्रिणः । त्वरमाणश्च निर्याहि कृत्यमात्ययिकं त्वया ॥ ७ ॥
मा चास्मै प्रोषितं रामं मा चास्मै पितरं मृतम् । भवन्तः शंसिषुर्गत्वा राघवाणामितः क्षयम् ॥ ८ ॥
कौशेयानि च वस्त्राणि भूषणानि वराणि च । क्षिप्रमादाय राज्ञश्च भरतस्य च गच्छत ॥ ९ ॥

Hearing the aforesaid speech of the counsellors (Mārkaṇḍeya and others), Vasiṣṭha, they say, addressed the following words to the king's friends, the ministers as well as to all the Brahmans assembled there on that occasion :—(1) "Since the celebrated Bharata, on whom kingship has been bestowed (by the emperor as urged by Kaikeyī), is leading a most happy and joyous life at his maternal uncle's with his (younger) brother Śatrughna; therefore let swift messengers proceed quickly on horses to bring the two gallant brothers. What (else) can we thoughtfully consider ?' (2-3) Then all submitted to Vasiṣṭha as follows :—"Let the messengers depart." Hearing that reply of the counsellors, Vasiṣṭha (again) spoke as follows :—(4) "Come along, O Siddhārtha, Vijaya, Jayanta, Aśoka and Nandana ! Please hear what has got to be done by you : I speak to you all. (5) Reaching the city of Rājagṛha quickly on (the back of) horses galloping at a swift speed, and shaking off grief, you should speak to Bharata under my orders as follows :—(6) 'The family priest as well as all the counsellors have told you that all is well. (Pray) depart (hence) hastily; there is some most urgent business awaiting you.' (7) Going there (pray) do not inform you him of Rāma having gone into exile or of his father having demised or of the (threatened) destruction of the scions of Raghu as a result of these incidents. (8) Taking (with you) silken robes as well as excellent ornaments for the king (Bharata's maternal grandfather) and Bharata (as a present from the king of Ayodhya), depart at once." (9)

दत्तपथ्यशना दूता जग्मुः स्वं स्वं निवेशनम् । केकयांस्ते गमिष्यन्तो हयानारुह्य सम्मतान् ॥१०॥
ततः प्रास्थानिकं कृत्वा कार्यशेषमनन्तरम् । वसिष्ठेनाभ्यनुज्ञाता दूताः संत्वरितं ययुः ॥११॥
न्यन्तेनापरतालस्य प्रलम्बस्योत्तरं प्रति । निषेवमाणास्ते जग्मुर्नदीं मध्येन मालिनीम् ॥१२॥
ते हास्तिनपुरे गङ्गां तीर्त्वा प्रत्यङ्मुखा ययुः । पञ्चालदेशमासाद्य मध्येन कुरुजाङ्गलम् ॥१३॥
सरांसि च सुफुल्लानि नदीश्च विमलोदकाः । निरीक्षमाणा जग्मुस्ते दूताः कार्यवशाद् द्रुतम् ॥१४॥
ते प्रसन्नोदकां दिव्यां नानाविहगसेविताम् । उपातिजग्मुर्वेगेन शरदण्डां जलाकुलाम् ॥१५॥

Having been furnished with the wherewithals to purchase provisions for the journey and while about to leave for the Kekaya kingdom mounting horses thought highly of (for their swiftness), the messengers proceeded' each to his own house (to take leave of his own people). (10) Having immediately finished all preparations that remained to be made for the journey, and duly permitted by Vasiṣṭha, the messengers proceeded post haste (to their destination). (11) They moved on touching Mālinī river flowing between the extreme (southern) end of Aparatāla mountain and the northern end of Pralamba mountain. (12) Crossing the Ganga at

Hastinapur they proceeded westward and, reaching the territory of Pañchāla through Kurujāngala and keenly perceiving lakes with full-blown flowers and rivers containing limpid waters, the aforesaid messengers swiftly moved on because of (the pressing nature of) their errand. (13-14) Reaching the bank of the charming river Śaradaṇḍā, which not only contained translucent waters but was also full of water and was frequented by birds of various kinds, they speedily crossed it. (15)

निकूलवृक्षमासाद्य दिव्यं सत्योपयाचनम् । अभिगम्याभिवाद्यं तं कुलिङ्गां प्राविशन् पुरीम् ॥१६॥
अभिकालं ततः प्राप्य तेजोऽभिभवनाच्च्युताः । पितृपैतामहीं पुण्यां तेरुरिक्षुमतीं नदीम् ॥१७॥
अवेक्ष्याञ्जलिपानांश्च ब्राह्मणान् वेदपारगान् । ययुर्मध्येन बाह्लीकान् सुदामानं च पर्वतम् ॥१८॥
विष्णोः पदं प्रेक्षमाणा विपाशां चापि शाल्मलीम् । नदीर्वापीतटाकानि पल्वलानि सरांसि च ॥१९॥
पश्यन्तो विविधांश्चापि सिंहान् व्याघ्रान् मृगान् द्विपान् । ययुः पथातिमहता शासनं भर्तुरीप्सवः ॥२०॥
ते श्रान्तवाहना दूता विकृष्टेन सता पथा । गिरिव्रजं पुरवरं शीघ्रमासेदुरञ्जसा ॥२१॥
भर्तुः प्रियार्थं कुलरक्षणार्थं भर्तुश्च वंशस्य परिग्रहार्थम् ।
अहेडमानास्त्वरया स्म दूता रात्र्यां तु ते तत्पुरमेव याताः ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टषष्टितमः सर्गः ॥ ६८ ॥

Reaching a holy tree (inhabited by some divinity) standing on the western bank of the Śaradaṇḍā, and named Satyopayāchana (so called because prayers addressed to it invariably proved efficacious), which was worthy of salutation, and going round it clockwise (as a token of respect), the messengers entered the city of Kulingā. (16) Emerged from the village of Tejobhibhavana and reaching thence, the village of Abhikāla, the messengers crossed the holy river Ikṣumatī, associated with the father and grandfather of the deceased emperor. (17) Nay, perceiving Brahmans who had mastered the Vedas and lived on as much water as could be contained in the hollow of their palms, they reached the Sudāmā mountain in the interior of the Bāhlīka kingdom (now known by the name of Balkh). (18) Beholding the spot (on the top of Sudāmā mountain) containing the footprints of Lord Viṣṇu, as well as the rivers Vipāśā (now known by the name of Beas) and Śālmalī and other rivers, big wells provided with stairs to reach the water and ponds, pools and lakes, and looking on lions, tigers, deer and elephants of various kinds, they proceeded along an exceptionally broad highway, keen as they were to execute the command of their master. (19-20) Even though their horses felt exhausted, the messengers shortly and directly reached the foremost town of Girivraja (the capital of the Kekaya kingdom) by a long yet peaceful route. (21) For the pleasure of their master (Sage Vasiṣṭha) as well as for the protection of the people and for (vindicating) the honour of their king's race the messengers for their part respectfully and speedily entered that town during the night itself. (22)

Thus ends Canto Sixty-eight in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

◆

एकोनसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXIX

Finding Bharata oppressed and sad, his friends try to beguile him by means of music and narration of stories. But when the prince does not return to his normal mood even then, they inquire of him as to what makes him pensive and Bharata tells them how he saw a bad dream the previous night.

यामेव रात्रिं ते दूताः प्रविशन्ति स्म तां पुरीम् । भरतेनापि तां रात्रिं स्वप्नो दृष्टोऽयमप्रियः ॥ १ ॥
व्युष्टामेव तु तां रात्रिं दृष्ट्वा तं स्वप्नमप्रियम् । पुत्रो राजाधिराजस्य सुभृशं पर्यतप्यत ॥ २ ॥
तप्यमानं तमाज्ञाय वयस्याः प्रियवादिनः । आयासं विनयिष्यन्तः सभायां चक्रिरे कथाः ॥ ३ ॥
वादयन्ति तदा शान्तिं लासयन्त्यपि चापरे । नाटकान्यपरे स्माहुर्हास्यानि विविधानि च ॥ ४ ॥
स तैर्महात्मा भरतः सखिभिः प्रियवादिभिः । गोष्ठीहास्यानि कुर्वद्भिर्न प्राहृष्यत राघवः ॥ ५ ॥
तमब्रवीत् प्रियसखो भरतं सखिभिर्वृतम् । सुहृद्भिः पर्युपासीनः किं सखे नानुमोदसे ॥ ६ ॥

The very night the aforesaid messengers entered that city (of Girivraja) an unpleasant dream, which is being described as follows, was seen by Bharata. (1) Seeing that unpleasant dream at an hour* when the night had well-nigh ended, Bharata (the emperor's son) felt extremely perturbed. (2) Finding him disconsolate, his friends, who (ever) spoke kindly (to him), commenced chatting in a coterie, seeking (as they did) to relieve his agony. (3) Some friends played upon musical instruments at that time, while others indulged in gentle dance (accompanied with vocal and instrumental music) with a view to relieving his anxiety; while (still) others read out (to him) dramas of various kinds having mirth for their dominant sentiment. (4) The aforesaid Bharata, a scion of Raghu and an exalted soul as he was, did not (however) feel much delighted in the company of those friends, who spoke kindly (to him) and indulged in jokes worthy of an assembly. (5) A beloved friend (of Bharata) spoke (as follows) to the said Bharata, who was surrounded by (many) friends:—"Why, O friend, do you not join us in rejoicing, sitting as you are in the midst of friends ?" (6)

एवं ब्रुवाणं सुहृदं भरतः प्रत्युवाच ह । श्रृणु त्वं यन्निमित्तं मे दैन्यमेतदुपागतम् ॥ ७ ॥
स्वप्ने पितरमद्राक्षं मलिनं मुक्तमूर्धजम् । पतन्तमद्रिशिखरात् कलुषे गोमये ह्रदे ॥ ८ ॥
प्लवमानश्च मे दृष्टः स तस्मिन् गोमये ह्रदे । पिबन्नञ्जलिना तैलं हसन्निव मुहुर्मुहुः ॥ ९ ॥
ततस्तिलोदनं भुक्त्वा पुनः पुनरधःशिराः । तैलेनाभ्यक्तसर्वाङ्गस्तैलमेवान्वगाहत ॥१०॥
स्वप्नेऽपि सागरं शुष्कं चन्द्रं च पतितं भुवि । उपरुद्धां च जगतीं तमसेव समावृताम् ॥११॥
औपवाह्यस्य नागस्य विषाणं शकलीकृतम् । सहसा चापि संशान्ता ज्वलिता जातवेदसः ॥१२॥
अवदीर्णां च पृथिवीं शुष्कांश्च विविधान् द्रुमान् । अहं पश्यामि विध्वस्तान् सधूमांश्चैव पर्वतान् ॥१३॥
पीठे कार्ष्णायसे चैव निषण्णं कृष्णवाससम् । प्रहसन्ति स्म राजानं प्रमदाः कृष्णपिङ्गलाः ॥१४॥
त्वरमाणश्च धर्मात्मा रक्तमाल्यानुलेपनः । रथेन खरयुक्तेन प्रयातो दक्षिणामुखः ॥१५॥
प्रहसन्तीव राजानं प्रमदा रक्तवासिनी । प्रकर्षन्ती मया दृष्टा राक्षसी विकृतानना ॥१६॥

---

* A dream seen at the close of night is believed to come true in a majority of cases.

To the friend speaking as aforesaid, Bharata replied as follows:—"Hear you the circumstances due to which this depression has overtaken me. (7) In a dream I saw father dejected and falling from a mountain-peak, his hair dishevelled, into a dirty pool full of cow-dung. (8) He was (further) seen by me swimming in that pool of cow-dung, drinking oil from the hollow of his palms and laughing as it were again and again. (9) Then, partaking of rice cooked with sesame seeds and (himself) smeared all over with sesame oil, he took a dip again and again head foremost in the oil. (10) Also in the dream I saw the ocean dry and the moon fallen on the earth and the (entire) globe molested (by Rākṣasas and others) and enveloped as it were in darkness. (11) I (further) beheld a tusk of the king's elephant broken to pieces and blazing fires suddenly extinguished. (12) I also saw the earth riven and trees of various kinds withered up and mountains too emitting smoke and razed to the ground. (13) Young women, dark and reddish brown of complexion, assailed the king, seated on an iron seat attired in black. (14) Nay, adorned with a garland of crimson flowers and smeared with red sandal-paste, the pious-minded king hastily departed southward in a chariot drawn by donkeys. (15) A young ogress with an ugly face and clad in crimson was seen by me mocking the king as it were and dragging him. (16)

एवमेतन्मया दृष्टमिमां रात्रिं भयावहाम् । अहं रामोऽथवा राजा लक्ष्मणो वा मरिष्यति ॥१७॥
नरो यानेन यः स्वप्ने खरयुक्तेन याति हि । अचिरात्तस्य धूम्राग्रं चितायां सम्प्रदृश्यते ॥१८॥
एतन्निमित्तं दीनोऽहं न वचः प्रतिपूजये । शुष्यतीव च मे कण्ठो न स्वस्थमिव मे मनः ॥१९॥
न पश्यामि भयस्थानं भयं चैवोपधारये ।
भ्रष्टश्च स्वरयोगो मे छाया चापगता मम । जुगुप्स इव चात्मानं न च पश्यामि कारणम् ॥२०॥
इमां च दुःस्वप्नगतिं निशम्य हि त्वनेकरूपामवितर्कितां पुरा ।
भयं महत्तु हृदयान्न याति मे विचिन्त्य राजानमचिन्त्यदर्शनम् ॥२१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकोनसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ६९ ॥

"During the last night, fearful as it was, this was the vision seen by me as aforesaid. (This prognosticates that) either myself or Śrī Rāma or the king or Lakṣmaṇa is going to die. (17) A column of smoke is surely and vividly perceived before long on the funeral pile of a man who drives in a dream in a chariot drawn by donkeys. (18) This is why I feel depressed and do not make much of your words. My throat is getting parched as it were and my mind is not quite at ease. (19) I do not perceive any (tangible) ground for fear, yet I experience fear. Nay, my voice has become hoarse and my lustre has departed. Moreover I have begun to hate myself, yet I do not see any cause (for it). (20) (Even) as I reflect on the course of me evil dreams, which were seen in many forms,—a course which was never imagined (by me) before,—and (even) as I think deeply of the king, whose sight is something which can no longer be anticipated, the great fear that has been roused (in me) does not depart from my heart. (21)"

Thus ends Canto Sixty-nine in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

सप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXX

While Bharata was narrating to his friends the dream seen by him the previous night, the messengers from Ayodhya arrive in his presence and, bowing low to Bharata, communicate to him the orders of Sage Vasiṣṭha. Having heard of the welfare of all from the mouth of the messengers, the prince takes leave of his maternal grandfather and others and departs for Ayodhya.

भरते ब्रुवति स्वप्नं दूतास्ते क्लान्तवाहनाः । प्रविश्यासह्यपरिखं रम्यं राजगृहं पुरम् ॥ १ ॥
समागम्य च राज्ञा ते राजपुत्रेण चार्चिताः । राज्ञः पादौ गृहीत्वा च तमूचुर्भरतं वचः ॥ २ ॥
पुरोहितस्त्वां कुशलं प्राह सर्वे च मन्त्रिणः । त्वरमाणश्च निर्याहि कृत्यमात्ययिकं त्वया ॥ ३ ॥
इमानि च महार्हाणि वस्त्राण्याभरणानि च । प्रतिगृह्य विशालाक्ष मातुलस्य च दापय ॥ ४ ॥
अत्र विंशतिकोट्यस्तु नृपतेर्मातुलस्य ते । दशकोट्यस्तु सम्पूर्णास्तथैव च नृपात्मज ॥ ५ ॥
प्रतिगृह्य तु तत् सर्वं स्वनुरक्तः सुहृज्जने । दूतानुवाच भरतः कामैः सम्प्रतिपूज्य तान् ॥ ६ ॥

Entering the lovely city of Rājagṛha,—the moat enclosing which was unassailable (by the enemies),—at a time when Bharata was narrating the dream (to his friends), their horses being exhausted, nay, meeting the king (of Kekaya) as well as the Crown prince and treated with honour (by them), and touching (as a mark of respect) the feet of Bharata (their prospective king), the aforesaid messengers spoke to the celebrated Bharata as follows:—(1-2) "Sage Vasiṣṭha (the family priest) as well as all the counsellors tell you that all is well. Yet please depart expeditiously. There is business with you, which cannot brook delay. (3) Nay, accepting (from us) these valuable robes and jewels, O large-eyed prince, have them presented to your maternal grandfather and maternal uncle too. (4) Of these, articles worth twenty crores of course are meant for the king; while full ten crores worth of articles are likewise meant for your maternal uncle, O prince!" (5) Accepting for his part all those presents (brought by the messengers from Ayodhya), Bharata, who was very fond of his near and dear ones, had them presented (on behalf of his royal father) to his maternal grandfather and maternal uncle and, having entertained the messengers with articles of food and drink coveted by them spoke to them (as follows):—(6)

कच्चित् स कुशली राजा पिता दशरथो मम । कच्चिदारोग्यता रामे लक्ष्मणे च महात्मनि ॥ ७ ॥
आर्या च धर्मनिरता धर्मज्ञा धर्मवादिनी । अरोगा चापि कौसल्या माता रामस्य धीमतः ॥ ८ ॥
कच्चित् सुमित्रा धर्मज्ञा जननी लक्ष्मणस्य या । शत्रुघ्नस्य च वीरस्य अरोगा चापि मध्यमा ॥ ९ ॥
आत्मकामा सदा चण्डी क्रोधना प्राज्ञमानिनी । अरोगा चापि मे माता कैकेयी किमुवाच ह ॥१०॥
एवमुक्तास्तु ते दूता भरतेन महात्मना । ऊचुः सम्प्रश्रितं वाक्यमिदं तं भरतं तदा ॥११॥

"Is my father, the celebrated Daśaratha, doing well? Does good health abide in Śrī Rāma and the high-souled Lakṣmaṇa? (7) And is the mother of the wise Śrī Rāma, the noble Kausalyā, who is devoted to virtue, knows what is right and talks virtue, enjoying good health? (8) Is my intermediate mother, Sumitrā,—who knows what is right and is the mother of Lakṣmaṇa and the valiant Śatrughna,—also free from ailment? (9) Is my own mother, Kaikeyī,—who always seeks to gain her own ends, is violent and given to wrath and accounts herself wise,—also healthy and what message has she sent (for me)?" (10) Questioned thus by the high-souled Bharata on that occasion, the aforesaid messengers for their part addressed the following most polite words to the said Bharata :—(11)

कुशलास्ते नरव्याघ्र येषां कुशलमिच्छसि । श्रीश्च त्वां वृणुते पद्मा युज्यतां चापि ते रथः ॥१२॥
भरतश्चापि तान् दूतानेवमुक्तोऽभ्यभाषत । आपृच्छेऽहं महाराजं दूताः संत्वरयन्ति माम् ॥१३॥
एवमुक्त्वा तु तान् दूतान् भरतः पार्थिवात्मजः । दूतैः संचोदितो वाक्यं मातामहमुवाच ह ॥१४॥
राजन् पितुर्गमिष्यामि सकाशं दूतचोदितः । पुनरप्यहमेष्यामि यदा मे त्वं स्मरिष्यसि ॥१५॥
भरतेनैवमुक्तस्तु नृपो मातामहस्तदा । तमुवाच शुभं वाक्यं शिरस्याघ्राय राघवम् ॥१६॥
गच्छ तातानुजाने त्वां कैकेयी सुप्रजास्त्वया । मातरं कुशलं ब्रूयाः पितरं च परंतप ॥१७॥
पुरोहितं च कुशलं ये चान्ये द्विजसत्तमाः । तौ च तात महेष्वासौ भ्रातरौ रामलक्ष्मणौ ॥१८॥

"They are (all) well, whose welfare you seek, O tiger among men! Nay, holding a lotus (in her hand), Śrī (the goddess of fortune), looks on you with favour. Therefore let your chariot be equipped (for journey)." (12) Told thus Bharata too replied to the messengers, "I shall (presently) seek the permission of the monarch (my maternal grandfather) saying that you (the messengers) are urging me to make haste (to depart for Ayodhya)". (13) Having told the messengers thus, Prince Bharata for his part made the following submission to his maternal grandfather, as entreated by the messengers: so the tradition goes :—(14) "Urged by the messengers I shall, Your Majesty, return to the presence of my father. I shall come again whenever you remember me." (15) Smelling (as a token of affection) the head of Bharata (a scion of Raghu), when requested as aforesaid by the latter on that occasion, the king, his maternal grandfather, addressed to him the following agreeable words :—(16) "Depart, dear child! I grant you leave to return (to Ayodhya). Kaikeyī is blessed with a noble son in you. Communicate, O tormentor of enemies, our welfare to your mother as well as to your father (on my behalf), also to Sage Vasiṣṭha (the family priest) and to other jewels among Brahmans, whoever are present (on the occasion) and (lastly) to the two celebrated brothers, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, the wielders of mighty bows." (17-18)

तस्मै हस्त्युत्तमांश्चित्रान् कम्बलानजिनानि च । सत्कृत्य केकयो राजा भरताय ददौ धनम् ॥१९॥
अन्तःपुरेऽतिसंवृद्धान् व्याघ्रवीर्यबलोपमान् । दंष्ट्रायुक्तान् महाकायाञ्शुनश्चोपायनं ददौ ॥२०॥
रुक्मनिष्कसहस्रे द्वे षोडशाश्वशतानि च । सत्कृत्य कैकयीपुत्रं केकयो धनमादिशत् ॥२१॥
तदामात्यानभिप्रेतान् विश्वास्यांश्च गुणान्वितान् । ददावश्वपतिः शीघ्रं भरतायानुयायिनः ॥२२॥
ऐरावतानैन्द्रशिरान् नागान् वै प्रियदर्शनान् । खराञ्छीघ्रान् सुसंयुक्तान् मातुलोऽस्मै धनं ददौ ॥२३॥

Treating him with honour, the king of Kekaya bestowed on the aforesaid Bharata foremost of elephants, multi-coloured blankets, deerskins and riches (consisting of gold vessels etc.). (19) He also gave as a present dogs of enormous size, possessed of large teeth, brought up with care in the gynaeceum (itself) and vying in prowess and strength (of body) with a tiger. (20) Receiving him kindly, the king of the Kekayas (further) bestowed on Bharata (the son of Kaikeyī) wealth consisting of two thousand gold mohurs and sixteen hundred horses. (21) On that occasion King Aśwapati (also) quickly sent as escorts for Bharata esteemed and trustworthy ministers endowed with good qualities. (22) Bharata's maternal uncle (Yudhājit) too bestowed on him wealth consisting of elephants of the Airāvata breed and those born in the territory of Indraśira and agreeable to the sight, as well as swift-going and well-trained mules. (23)

स दत्तं केकयेन्द्रेण धनं तन्नाभ्यनन्दत । भरतः केकयीपुत्रो गमनत्वरया तदा ॥२४॥
बभूव ह्यस्य हृदये चिन्ता सुमहती तदा । त्वरया चापि दूतानां स्वप्नस्यापि च दर्शनात् ॥२५॥
स स्ववेश्माभ्यतिक्रम्य नरनागाश्वसंकुलम् । प्रपेदे सुमहच्छ्रीमान् राजमार्गमनुत्तमम् ॥२६॥
अभ्यतीत्य ततोऽपश्यदन्तःपुरमनुत्तमम् । ततस्तद् भरतः श्रीमानाविवेशानिवारितः ॥२७॥
स मातामहमापृच्छय मातुलं घ युधाजितम् । रथमारुह्य भरतः शत्रुघ्नसहितो ययौ ॥२८॥
रथान् मण्डलचक्रांश्च योजयित्वा परं शतम् । उष्ट्रगोऽश्वखरैर्भृत्या भरतं यान्तमन्वयुः ॥२९॥
बलेन गुप्तो भरतो महात्मा सहायंकस्यात्मसमैरमात्यैः ।
आदाय शत्रुघ्नमपेतशत्रुर्गृहाद् ययौ सिद्ध इवेन्द्रलोकात् ॥३०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७० ॥

Because of his hurry to depart (for Ayodhya) Bharata, the son of Kaikeyī, did not at that moment welcome the aforesaid wealth gifted by the king of the Kekayas. (24) Nay, due to the hastening of the messengers and also because of his having seen the (ominous) dream indeed a very great anxiety appeared in his heart at that time. (25) Returning to his own residence and then leaving it, Bharata, who (now) owned a very large fortune, reached the main road, which was crowded with men, elephants and horses and unexcelled (by other roads). (26) Passing thence he saw the gynaeceum, which was unsurpassed (by other mansions). The glorious Bharata thereupon entered it unchallenged. (27) Taking leave of his maternal grandfather (and grandmother) as well as of his maternal uncle, Yudhājit, (and aunt) and mounting his chariot with Śatrughna, the said Bharata left (for Ayodhya). (28) Fitting a hundred other chariots having circular wheels with camels, bullocks, horses and mules, servants (of King Aśwapati) followed Bharata as he departed. (29) Guarded by a detachment sent by his maternal grandfather and taking Śatrughna (with him), Bharata, who was possessed of great fortitude and had no enemies, departed with ministers who were equalled by (none but) themselves from his residence (even) as a Siddha (a member of a class of demigods credited with supernatural powers by virtue of their very birth) would from the realm of Indra (the lord of paradise). (30)

Thus ends Canto Seventy in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXI

When Bharata reaches Ayodhya after crossing many streams and rivers and passing through different territories and finds the city cheerless and wearing a deserted look, he sets about brooding and speculating as to what may be the reason for this and, speaking to the charioteer about it, enters the palace dejected and disconsolate.

स प्राङ्मुखो राजगृहादभिनिर्याय वीर्यवान् । ततः सुदामां द्युतिमान् संतीर्यावेक्ष्य तां नदीम् ॥ १ ॥
ह्रादिनीं दूरपारां च प्रत्यक्स्रोतस्तरङ्गिणीम् । शतद्रुमतरच्छ्रीमान् नदीमिक्ष्वाकुनन्दनः ॥ २ ॥
ऐलधाने नदीं तीर्त्वा प्राप्य चापरपर्वतान् । शिलामाकुर्वतीं तीर्त्वा आग्नेयं शल्यकर्षणम् ॥ ३ ॥
सत्यसंधः शुचिर्भूत्वा प्रेक्षमाणः शिलावहाम् । अभ्यगात् स महाशैलान् वनं चैत्ररथं प्रति ॥ ४ ॥
सरस्वतीं च गङ्गां च युग्मेन प्रतिपद्य च । उत्तरान् वीरमत्स्यानां भारुण्डं प्राविशद् वनम् ॥ ५ ॥
वेगिनीं च कुलिङ्गाख्यां ह्रादिनीं पर्वतावृताम् । यमुनां प्राप्य संतीर्णो बलमाश्वासयत् तदा ॥ ६ ॥
शीतीकृत्य तु गात्राणि क्लान्तानाश्वास्य वाजिनः । तत्र स्नात्वा च पीत्वा च प्रायादादाय चोदकम् ॥ ७ ॥
राजपुत्रो महारण्यमनभीक्ष्णोपसेवितम् । भद्रो भद्रेण यानेन मरुतः खमिवात्यगात् ॥ ८ ॥
भागीरथीं दुष्प्रतरां सोंऽशुधाने महानदीम् । उपायाद् राघवस्तूर्णं प्राग्वटे विश्रुते पुरे ॥ ९ ॥

Proceeding from Rājagṛha in an easterly direction and then surveying and crossing the well-known river Sudāmā* as well as the broad river Hrādinī, the powerful and dignified Bharata, a glorious scion of Ikṣwāku, crossed the river Śatadru (the modern Sutlej), whose stream takes a westward course. (1-2) Crossing another stream at Ailadhāna (a village of that name) and reaching the territory of Aparaparvata and crossing a river which petrified everything thrown into it, he reached the tract lying to the south-east and known by the name of Śalyākarṣaṇa (so called because it abounded in a herb possessing the virtue of extracting a thorn etc.). (3) Gazing on the river Śilāvahā (so called because it carried away even rocks along its swift stream) and getting purified (through bathing in it), Bharata (who was true to his promise) crossed the Mahāśaila hills heading towards the forest of Chaitraratha. (4) Reaching the river Saraswatī (flowing towards the west) and (a branch of) the (holy) Ganga at their confluence, he passed through the northern part of the Vīramatsya territory and entered the forest of Bhāruṇḍa. (5) Having duly crossed the swift and thundering river named Kulingā, hemmed in by mountains, and reaching the Yamuna, he allowed the detachment (accompanying him) to rest for the time being. (6) Refreshing the limbs of the horses (by bathing them) and giving the fatigued animals (food and) rest (in the shade of trees), nay, (himself) bathing and quenching his thirst, and taking water (for the journey ahead), Bharata proceeded further. (7) The prince, who had undergone propitious rites (before embarking on the long journey), crossed (speedily) by his excellent chariot the great forest (lying in the way), which was not frequented, (even) as the wind sweeps through the atmosphere. (8) Finding the great river Ganga (associated with the name of Emperor Bhagīratha, who was instrumental in bringing the stream to the terrestrial region) difficult to cross at (the village of) Aṃśudhāna, Bharata, (a scion of Raghu) hastily approached it (with a view to crossing it) at the well-known town of Prāgvaṭa (where it could be easily crossed). (9)

---

* The messengers sent to call Bharata from his maternal grandfather's rode to Rājagṛha by a shorter yet more difficult route through the forest region. Bharata, however, was accompanied by an army and therefore drove through a broader yet longer route. Hence it took him a full week to reach Ayodhya and he had to pass through places which the messengers did not come across in their journey.

स गङ्गां प्राग्वटे तीर्त्वा समायात् कुटिकोष्टिकाम् । सबलस्तां स तीर्त्वाथ समगाद् धर्मवर्धनम् ॥१०॥
तोरणं दक्षिणार्धेन जम्बूप्रस्थं समागमत् । वरूथं च ययौ रम्यं ग्रामं दशरथात्मजः ॥११॥
तत्र रम्ये वने वासं कृत्वासौ प्राङ्मुखो ययौ । उद्यानमुज्जिहानायाः प्रियका यत्र पादपाः ॥१२॥
स तांस्तु प्रियकान् प्राप्य शीघ्रानास्थाय वाजिनः । अनुज्ञाप्याथ भरतो वाहिनीं त्वरितो ययौ ॥१३॥
वासं कृत्वा सर्वतीर्थे तीर्त्वा चोत्तानिकां नदीम् । अन्या नदीश्च विविधैः पार्वतीयैस्तुरंगमैः ॥१४॥
हस्तिपृष्ठकमासाद्य कुटिकामत्यवर्तत । ततार च नरव्याघ्रो लौहित्ये च कपीवतीम् ॥१५॥
एकसाले स्थाणुमतीं विनते गोमतीं नदीम् । कलिङ्गनगरे चापि प्राप्य सालवनं तदा ॥१६॥
भरतः क्षिप्रमागच्छत् सुपरिश्रान्तवाहनः । वनं च समतीत्याशु शर्वर्यामरुणोदये ॥१७॥
अयोध्यां मनुना राज्ञा निर्मितां स ददर्श ह । तां पुरीं पुरुषव्याघ्रः सप्तरात्रोषितः पथि ॥१८॥

Crossing the (holy) Ganga at Prāgvaṭa, he reached the river Kuṭikoṣṭikā. Again crossing the latter along with the detachment (accompanying him), he duly arrived at (the village of) Dharmavardhana. (10) Bharata (son of Daśaratha) duly reached (the village of) Jambūprastha through the southern portion of (the village of) Toraṇa and (then) arrived at the lovely village of Varūtha. (11) Having halted (for the night) in a delightful grove adjoining that village, he drove in an easterly direction to the garden of Ujjihānā (a city), in which existed (a cluster of) Kadamba trees. (12) Having reached those Kadamba trees and getting swifter horses yoked to his chariot and allowing the army to come slowly (since he had reached his own territory), Bharata for his part hastily proceeded (further). (13) Having halted (that night) in (the village of) Sarvatīrtha and forded (next morning) the river Uttānikā and other streams on the back of various mountain ponies and reaching (the village of) Hastipṛṣṭhaka, Bharata (a tiger among men) crossed the river Kuṭikā and at Lohitya (another village) crossed the river Kapīvatī (too). (14-15) He crossed the Sthāṇumatī at (the village of) Ekasāla and, reaching the river Gomti, he crossed it near (the village of) Vinata. And then Bharata quickly reached a grove of sal trees at Kalinganagara. Nay, hurriedly driving through the grove during the night, his horses having been completely exhausted, the tiger among men beheld the celebrated city of Ayodhya, founded by King (Vaivaswata) Manu, at dawn, having spent seven nights in the way : so the tradition goes. (16—18)

अयोध्यामग्रतो दृष्ट्वा सारथिं चेदमब्रवीत् । एषा नातिप्रतीता मे पुण्योद्याना यशस्विनी ॥१९॥
अयोध्या दृश्यते दूरात्सारथे पाण्डुमृत्तिका । यज्वभिर्गुणसम्पन्नैर्ब्राह्मणैर्वेदपारगैः ॥२०॥
भूयिष्ठमृद्धैराकीर्णा राजर्षिवरपालिता । अयोध्यायां पुरा शब्दः श्रूयते तुमुलो महान् ॥२१॥

समन्तान्नरनारीणां तमद्य न शृणोम्यहम् । उद्यानानि हि सायाह्ने क्रीडित्वोपरतैर्नरैः ॥२२॥
समन्ताद् विप्रधावद्भिः प्रकाशन्ते ममान्यथा । तान्यद्यानुरुदन्तीव परित्यक्तानि कामिभिः ॥२३॥
अरण्यभूतेव पुरी सारथे प्रतिभाति माम् ।
न ह्यत्र यानैर्दृश्यन्ते न गजैर्न च वाजिभिः । निर्यान्तो वाभियान्तो वा नरमुख्या यथा पुरा ॥२४॥
उद्यानानि पुरा भान्ति मत्तप्रमुदितानि च । जनानां रतिसंयोगेष्वत्यन्तगुणवन्ति च ॥२५॥
तान्येतान्यद्य पश्यामि निरानन्दानि सर्वशः । स्रस्तपर्णैरनुपथं विक्रोशद्भिरिव द्रुमैः ॥२६॥
नाद्यापि श्रूयते शब्दो मत्तानां मृगपक्षिणाम् । सरक्तां मधुरां वाणीं कलं व्याहरतां बहु ॥२७॥
चन्दनागुरुसम्पृक्तो धूपसम्मूर्च्छितोऽमलः । प्रवाति पवनः श्रीमान् किं नु नाद्य यथा पुरा ॥२८॥
भेरीमृदङ्गवीणानां कोणसंघट्टितः पुनः । किमद्य शब्दो विरतः सदादीनगतिः पुरा ॥२९॥
अनिष्टानि च पापानि पश्यामि विविधानि च । निमित्तान्यमनोज्ञानि तेन सीदति मे मनः ॥३०॥
सर्वथा कुशलं सूत दुर्लभं मम बन्धुषु । तथा ह्यसति सम्मोहे हृदयं सीदतीव मे ॥३१॥

Nay, seeing Ayodhya in front of him, Bharata spoke as follows to the charioteer :—"This well-famed city, consisting of sacred gardens, does not look very cheerful to me. (19) Ayodhya, O charioteer, which was thickly crowded with Brahmans given to sacrificial performances, endowed with good qualities and well-versed in the Vedas, as well as. with wealthy men and was protected by the foremost of royal sages, looks from a distance to be a heap of white clay. Formerly in Ayodhya was heard on all sides a great confused noise of men and women; I do not hear it today. Indeed gardens, which looked bright with men running helter-skelter on all sides, having ceased sporting (in the morning) after entering them at dusk and sporting (the whole night), appear to me (quite) different. Deserted by gallants, they are weeping as it were today. (20—23) The city, O charioteer, appears to me as converted into a woodland; for high-class men are not seen going out or coming here in conveyances or on (the back of) elephants or horses as before. (24) The gardens (in this city) formerly looked excited with joy and enraptured and were extremely favourable for love-contacts of men. (25) Today I find those very gardens bereft of joy in every way with their trees shedding (tears in the form of) leaves on the alleys and piteously wailing as it were. (26) Not even at this hour (of sun-rise) is heard the cry of deer and birds in rut profusely and inarticulately giving forth their sweet and impassioned utterances. (27) I wonder how a pure and delightful breeze laden with the fragrance of sandalwood and aloe and scented with the fume of burnt incense does not blow today as before. (28) How has the sound, which ever proceeded unstintedly in the past, of kettledrums, clay tomtoms and Vinas, played upon with a drum-stick, palms or fingers, has ceased only today ? (29) I also perceive unwelcome, portentous and unpleasant omens of every description. My mind is feeling dejected on that score. (30) The all-round welfare of my near and dear ones is difficult to find, O charioteer ! (For) even when there is no (ostensible) cause for infatuation my heart is sinking as it were." (31)

विषण्णः श्रान्तहृदयस्त्रस्तः संलुलितेन्द्रियः । भरतः प्रविवेशाशु पुरीमिक्ष्वाकुपालिताम् ॥३२॥
द्वारेण वैजयन्तेन प्राविशच्छ्रान्तवाहनः । द्वाःस्थैरुत्थाय विजयमुक्तस्तैः सहितो ययौ ॥३३॥
स त्वनेकाग्रहृदयो द्वाःस्थं प्रत्यर्च्य तं जनम् । सूतमश्वपतेः क्लान्तमब्रवीत् तत्र राघवः ॥३४॥

Dejected and alarmed, his heart weary and senses extremely perturbed, Bharata speedily entered the city protected by the scions of Ikṣwāku. (32) His horses being fatigued, he effected his entry by the western gate (known by the name of Vaijayanta). Greeted with shouts of triumph by the porters, who rose to usher him in, he moved on accompanied by them. (33) Sending the porters back with honour, the said Bharata (a scion of Raghu) for his part, troubled as he was at heart, spoke on the spot to the wearied charioteer of King Aśwapati (as follows):— (34)

किमहं त्वरयाऽऽनीतः कारणेन विनानघ । अशुभाशङ्कि हृदयं शीलं च पततीव मे ॥३५॥
श्रुता नु यादृशाः पूर्वं नृपतीनां विनाशने । आकारांस्तानहं सर्वानिह पश्यामि सारथे ॥३६॥
सम्मार्जनविहीनानि परुषाण्युपलक्षये । असंयतकवाटानि श्रीविहीनानि सर्वशः ॥३७॥
बलिकर्मविहीनानि धूपसम्मोदनेन च । अनाशितकुटुम्बानि प्रभाहीनजनानि च ॥३८॥
अलक्ष्मीकानि पश्यामि कुटुम्बिभवनान्यहम् । अपेतमाल्यशोभानि असम्मृष्टाजिराणि च ॥३९॥
देवागाराणि शून्यानि न भान्तीह यथा पुरा । देवतार्चाः प्रविद्धाश्च यज्ञगोष्ठास्तथैव च ॥४०॥
माल्यापणेषु राजन्ते नाद्य पण्यानि वा तथा । दृश्यन्ते वणिजोऽप्यद्य न यथा पूर्वमत्र वै ॥४१॥
ध्यानसंविग्नहृदया नष्टव्यापारयन्त्रिताः । देवायतनचैत्येषु दीनाः पक्षिमृगास्तथा ॥४२॥
मलिनं चाश्रुपूर्णाक्षं दीनं ध्यानपरं कृशम् । सस्त्रीपुंसं च पश्यामि जनमुत्कण्ठितं पुरे ॥४३॥

"Why have I been brought (to Ayodhya) in a hurry without (mentioning) any cause, O sinless one? My heart is (therefore) apprehensive of some misfortune and my composure is vanishing (as it were). (35) I observe at this moment, O charioteer, all those indications that have been heard of (by me) in the past as pointing to the demise of kings. (36) I behold the dwellings of householders unswept, dirty-coloured, shorn of splendour in every way and with open doors. (37) I find that no oblations have been offered in them to the various creatures, that they are devoid of odour coming from the burning of incense and bereft of fortune, that members of the household have not been fed in them (for many days past) and their inmates look pale. Temples which are no longer adorned with garlands (hanging on the gates), whose courtyards have not been swept (for the last so many days) and which are devoid of men, do not look charming now as before. Images of gods as well as sacrificial halls have been deserted; salable goods (such as flowers and garlands) do not figure prominently as before in flower marts today. Merchants too in this city, whose hearts are seized with fear due to anxiety and who feel dispirited because of their business having been brought to a standstill, do not appear (as happy) as they looked before. Nay, birds and beasts in temples and (other) places of worship are distressed. (38—42) Again, I behold the people in the city, including men and women, in soiled attire, miserable, worried, emaciated and sorrowful, with eyes full of tears." (43)

इत्येवमुक्त्वा भरतः सूतं तं दीनमानसः । तान्यनिष्टान्ययोध्यायां प्रेक्ष्य राजगृहं ययौ ॥४४॥
तां शून्यशृङ्गाटकवेश्मरथ्यां रजोऽरुणद्वारकवाटयन्त्राम् ।
दृष्ट्वा पुरीमिन्द्रपुरीप्रकाशां दुःखेन सम्पूर्णतरो बभूव ॥४५॥
बभूव पश्यन् मनसोऽप्रियाणि यान्यन्यदा नास्य पुरे बभूवुः ।
अवाक्शिरा दीनमना नहृष्टः पितुर्महात्मा प्रविवेश वेश्म ॥४६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७१ ॥

Perceiving those unwelcome indications in Ayodhya and having spoken to the said charioteer as above, Bharata drove to the royal palace afflicted in mind. (44) He was filled to the brim with sorrow to see that city, which shone (at one time) like Amarāvatī (the capital of Indra in paradise), with its cross-roads, houses and streets desolate and its doors and bolts soiled with dust. (45) Beholding things distasteful to the mind, things which had never come to pass in his city before, the high-souled Bharata became cheerless and entered his father's apartments distressed in mind, his head hung down. (46)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-one in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्विसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXII

Entering his father's apartments and not finding him there, Bharata moves to his mother's apartments and, having communicated to her the welfare of his maternal grandfather and others on being questioned by her, inquires of her the whereabouts of his father. Kaikeyī then breaks to him the news of his father's death, attributing it to Śrī Rāma's exile and holding herself responsible for the latter, and after comforting him calls upon him to get himself installed on the throne after finishing his father's obsequies.

अपश्यंस्तु ततस्तत्र पितरं पितुरालये । जगाम भरतो द्रष्टुं मातरं मातुरालये ॥ १ ॥
अनुप्राप्तं तु तं दृष्ट्वा कैकेयी प्रोषितं सुतम् । उत्पपात तदा हृष्टा त्यक्त्वा सौवर्णमासनम् ॥ २ ॥
स प्रविश्यैव धर्मात्मा स्वगृहं श्रीविवर्जितम् । भरतः प्रेक्ष्य जग्राह जनन्याश्चरणौ शुभौ ॥ ३ ॥
तं मूर्ध्नि समुपाघ्राय परिष्वज्य यशस्विनम् । अङ्के भरतमारोप्य प्रष्टुं समुपचक्रमे ॥ ४ ॥
अद्य ते कतिचिद् रात्र्यश्च्युतस्यार्यकवेश्मनः । अपि नाध्वश्रमः शीघ्रं रथेनापततस्तव ॥ ५ ॥
आर्यकस्ते सुकुशली युधाजिन्मातुलस्तव । प्रवासाच्च सुखं पुत्र सर्वं मे वक्तुमर्हसि ॥ ६ ॥

Not finding his father in the latter's apartments in the palace, Bharata for his part then proceeded to see his mother in her apartments. (1) Rejoiced to see her aforesaid son, who had (long) been absent from home, returned, Kaikeyī for her part sprang on her feet at once, quitting her seat of gold. (2) Immediately on entering his (mother's) apartments and observing them completely shorn of splendour, the celebrated Bharata, whose mind was given to piety, clasped his mother's lovable feet. (3) Duly smelling his head (as a token of motherly affection) and embracing the illustrious Bharata and seating him on her lap, she coolly proceeded to question him (as follows):— (4) "How many nights have elapsed today since you departed from your maternal grandfather's abode and was not fatigue experienced by you in the course of the (long and tedious) journey while you rode fast in your chariot? (5) Is your maternal grandfather as well as your maternal uncle, Yudhājit, enjoying perfect health? And has everything been well with you (ever) since you left home, my son? You should tell me everything." (5-6)

एवं पृष्टस्तु कैकेय्या प्रियं पार्थिवनन्दनः । आचष्ट भरतः सर्वं मात्रे राजीवलोचनः ॥ ७ ॥
अद्य मे सप्तमी रात्रिश्च्युतस्यार्यकवेश्मनः । अम्बायाः कुशली तातो युधाजिन्मातुलश्च मे ॥ ८ ॥
यन्मे धनं च रत्नं च ददौ राजा परंतपः । परिश्रान्तं पथ्यभवत् ततोऽहं पूर्वमागतः ॥ ९ ॥
राजवाक्यहरैर्दूतैस्त्वर्यमाणोऽहमागतः । यदहं प्रष्टुमिच्छामि तदम्बा वक्तुमर्हति ॥१०॥
शून्योऽयं शयनीयस्ते पर्यङ्को हेमभूषितः । न चायमिक्ष्वाकुजनः प्रहृष्टः प्रतिभाति मे ॥११॥
राजा भवति भूयिष्ठमिहाम्बाया निवेशने । तमहं नाद्य पश्यामि द्रष्टुमिच्छन्निहागतः ॥१२॥
पितुर्ग्रहीष्ये पादौ च तं ममाख्याहि पृच्छतः । आहोस्विदम्बाज्येष्ठायाः कौसल्याया निवेशने ॥१३॥

Questioned thus in endearing terms by Kaikeyī, the lotus-eyed Prince Bharata, for his part, related to his mother everything (concerning himself). (7) (He said) "Today has elapsed the seventh night since I departed from the abode of my maternal grandfather. My maternal grandfather as well as my maternal uncle, Yudhājit, is enjoying good health. (8) The animals carrying the wealth (gold) and jewels that King Aśwapati (a tormentor of his enemies) gave (to me) got fatigued on the way; hence I came away first. (9) Being urged by the messengers, carrying the royal message, to hurry up, I came away (in advance). Be pleased, O mother, to tell me (now) what I intend to ask. (10) This couch of yours, fit for reposing on and plated with gold (as it is), is unoccupied (by the king, who used to grace it every now and then). These attendants of Daśaratha (a scion of Ikṣwāku) do not appear much delighted to me either. (11) The king used mostly to be present here in your apartments. Though I have come here longing to see him, I do not see him today. (12) Nay, I shall clasp the feet of my father: (pray) tell me, (even) as I ask you, where he may be. Is he in the apartments of Kausalyā, the seniormost of my mothers?" (13)

तं प्रत्युवाच कैकेयी प्रियवद् घोरमप्रियम् । अजानन्तं प्रजानन्ती राज्यलोभेन मोहिता ॥१४॥
या गतिः सर्वभूतानां तां गतिं ते पिता गतः । राजा महात्मा तेजस्वी यायजूकः सतां गतिः ॥१५॥
तच्छ्रुत्वा भरतो वाक्यं धर्माभिजनवाञ्छुचिः । पपात सहसा भूमौ पितृशोकबलार्दितः ॥१६॥
हा हतोऽस्मीति कृपणां दीनां वाचमुदीरयन् । निपपात महाबाहुर्बाहू विक्षिप्य वीर्यवान् ॥१७॥
ततः शोकेन संवीतः पितुर्मरणदुःखितः । विललाप महातेजा भ्रान्ताकुलितचेतनः ॥१८॥
एतत् सुरुचिरं भाति पितुर्मे शयनं पुरा । शशिनेवामलं रात्रौ गगनं तोयदात्यये ॥१९॥
तदिदं न विभात्यद्य विहीनं तेन धीमता । व्योमेव शशिना हीनमप्शुष्क इव सागरः ॥२०॥
बाष्पमुत्सृज्य कण्ठेन स्वात्मना परिपीडितः । प्रच्छाद्य वदनं श्रीमद् वस्त्रेण जयतां वरः ॥२१॥

Infatuated by greed of sovereignty, Kaikeyī, who knew everything in detail, related to Bharata, who knew nothing (about it), the whole thing, which was (so) terrible and unpleasant, as though it were agreeable (to hear):—(14) "The high-souled and glorious king, your father, who was given to the performance of sacrifices and was the haven of the virtuous, has met the same fate as is the destined end of all created beings." (15) Hearing the aforesaid reply (from the lips of Kaikeyī), the guileless Bharata, who came of a pious family, fell to the ground all at once, hard smitten with grief caused by the death of his father. (16) Uttering in piteous tones the plaintive words "Alas, I am ruined!" and striking his arms against the floor, the heroic Bharata (who possessed long arms) fell prostrate. (17) Overwhelmed with grief and distressed over the death of his father, Bharata (who was endowed with great glory) then lamented (in the following words), his mind being confused and agitated (through grief):—(18) "This couch of my father looked most charming before like a clear sky adorned with the moon on an autumnal night. (19) Devoid of that sagacious king (however), the same couch does not shine brightly today any more than a moon less sky or a sea whose water has been dried up (by the fire of universal dissolution)." (20) Shedding tears with a sound (expressive of anguish) from his throat, and covering his charming face with a cloth, Bharata (the foremost of victorious men), who felt greatly troubled in his own mind, continued to wail. (21)

तमार्तं देवसंकाशं समीक्ष्य पतितं भुवि । निकृत्तमिव सालस्य स्कन्धं परशुना वने ॥२२॥
माता मातङ्गसंकाशं चन्द्रार्कसदृशं सुतम् । उत्थापयित्वा शोकार्तं वचनं चेदमब्रवीत् ॥२३॥
उत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ किं शेषे राजन्नत्र महायशः । त्वद्विधा नहि शोचन्ति सन्तः सदसि सम्मताः ॥२४॥
दानयज्ञाधिकारा हि शीलश्रुतितपोऽनुगा । बुद्धिस्ते बुद्धिसम्पन्न प्रभेवार्कस्य मन्दिरे ॥२५॥

Perceiving her aforesaid son, shining brightly like a god,—who closely resembled (the young of) an elephant and vied with the moon and the sun (in splendour) and felt stricken with grief, fallen in a wretched plight on the ground like a bough of a sal severed with an axe in a forest,—and lifting him, the mother (Kaikeyī) spoke to him as follows:—(22-23) "Get up, O king! Rise, O highly illustrious one! Wherefore are you lying down here (on the ground)? Virtuous souls like you, honoured in an assembly (of men), do not grieve. (24) Your mind, O prince richly endowed with intelligence,—which is (ever) devoted to charity and sacrificial performances and which pursues right conduct,—follows (the injunctions of) the Vedas, and is prone to austerities,—is steady as the radiance of the sun is fixed in the orb of the sun." (25)

स रुदित्वा चिरं कालं भूमौ परिविवृत्य च । जननीं प्रत्युवाचेदं शोकैर्बहुभिरावृतः ॥२६॥
अभिषेक्ष्यति रामं तु राजा यज्ञं नु यक्ष्यते । इत्यहं कृतसंकल्पो हृष्टो यात्रामयासिषम् ॥२७॥
तदिदं ह्यन्यथाभूतं व्यवदीर्णं मनो मम । पितरं यो न पश्यामि नित्यं प्रियहिते रतम् ॥२८॥
अम्ब केनात्यगाद् राजा व्याधिना मय्यनागते । धन्या रामादयः सर्वे यैः पिता संस्कृतः स्वयम् ॥२९॥
न नूनं मां महाराजः प्राप्तं जानाति कीर्तिमान् । उपजिघ्रेत् तु मां मूर्ध्नि तातः संनाम्य सत्वरम् ॥३०॥
क्व स पाणिः सुखस्पर्शस्तातस्याक्लिष्टकर्मणः । यो हि मां रजसा ध्वस्तमभीक्ष्णं परिमार्जति ॥३१॥
यो मे भ्राता पिता बन्धुर्यस्य दासोऽस्मि सम्मतः । तस्य मां शीघ्रमाख्याहि रामस्याक्लिष्टकर्मणः ॥३२॥
पिता हि भवति ज्येष्ठो धर्ममार्यस्य जानतः । तस्य पादौ ग्रहीष्यामि स हीदानीं गतिर्मम ॥३३॥
धर्मविद् धर्मशीलश्च महाभागो दृढव्रतः । आर्ये किमब्रवीद् राजा पिता मे सत्यविक्रमः ॥३४॥
पश्चिमं साधुसंदेशमिच्छामि श्रोतुमात्मनः ।

Weeping for a long time and rolling on the floor, Bharata, who was filled with many-sided grief, replied to his mother as follows:—(26) "Having arrived at the conclusion that the king will most probably install Śrī

Rāma (as Prince Regent) or perform a sacrifice, I gladly undertook the journey (to Ayodhya). (27) Indeed that calculation (of mine) has come to be incorrect, (and) my mind is torn (with anguish) in that I do not behold my father, who was ever intent on doing kind acts to me and devoted to my good. (28) Of what disease did the king die before I arrived, O mother ? (How) fortunate are Śrī Rāma and all others, by whom father was cremated with their own hands ! (29) Surely the illustrious emperor does not know me to have come (home). Otherwise, pressing me down, father would have quickly smelt my head (as a token of affection). (30) Where is that hand, agreeable to the touch, of my father,—who did (great) things without (much) exertion,—that would wipe me again and again when he found me soiled with dust. (31) (Pray) announce me soon to Śrī Rāma, who is unwearied in action, (nay) who is my (elder) brother, father (in the absence of the emperor) and friend (all in one), and whose beloved servant I am. (32) To a worthy man knowing what is right, an elder brother is a virtual father. I shall clasp his feet (as a mark of respect) since he is my support now. (33) What did the king, my father, of firm resolve and unfailing prowess,—who knew what is right, had a virtuous disposition and was highly fortunate,—say to my elder brother (at the last moment) ? (34) I wish to hear his last kind message for me."

इति पृष्टा यथातत्त्वं कैकेयी वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥३५॥
रामति राजा विलपन् हा सीते लक्ष्मणेति च । स महात्मा परं लोकं गतो मतिमतां वरः ॥३६॥
इतीमां पश्चिमां वाचं व्याजहार पिता तव । कालधर्मपरिक्षिप्तः पाशैरिव महागजः ॥३७॥
सिद्धार्थास्तु नरा राममागतं सह सीतया । लक्ष्मणं च महाबाहुं द्रक्ष्यन्ति पुनरागतम् ॥३८॥
तच्छ्रुत्वा विषसादैव द्वितीयाप्रियशंसनात् । विषण्णवदनो भूत्वा भूयः पप्रच्छ मातरम् ॥३९॥
क्व चेदानीं स धर्मात्मा कौसल्यानन्दवर्धनः । लक्ष्मणेन सह भ्रात्रा सीतया च समागतः ॥४०॥
तथा पृष्टा यथान्यायमाख्यातुमुपचक्रमे । मातास्य युगपद्वाक्यं विप्रियं प्रियशंसया ॥४१॥
स हि राजसुतः पुत्र चीरवासा महावनम् । दण्डकान् सह वैदेह्या लक्ष्मणानुचरो गतः ॥४२॥
तच्छ्रुत्वा भरतस्त्रस्तो भ्रातुश्चारित्रशङ्कया । स्वस्य वंशस्य माहात्म्यात् प्रष्टुं समुपचक्रमे ॥४३॥
कच्चिन्न ब्राह्मणधनं हृतं रामेण कस्यचित् । कच्चिन्नाढ्यो दरिद्रो वा तेनापापो विहिंसितः ॥४४॥
कच्चिन्न परदारान् वा राजपुत्रोऽभिमन्यते । कस्मात् स दण्डकारण्ये भ्राता रामो विवासितः ॥४५॥

Questioned thus, Kaikeyī replied as follows (strictly) in consonance with facts :—(35) "That high-souled monarch, the foremost among the wise, departed for the other world crying 'O Rāma, Oh Sītā, O Lakṣmaṇa !!!' (36) Bound by the laws of Time (according to which a living being meets his end at the appointed time), like a huge elephant bound with ropes, your father uttered the following parting words :—(37) 'Only those men who (are able to) behold Rāma returned with Sītā, as also the mighty-armed Lakṣmaṇa come back (to Ayodhya) will have their object accomplished." (38) Hearing the aforesaid report, the prince grew melancholy at that other unpleasant tidings and, assuming a dejected look, further questioned his mother (as follows) :—(39) "Where is Śrī Rāma, whose mind is given to virtue and who enhances the joy of Kausalyā, now, conjoined with brother Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā ?" (40) Questioned as aforesaid, his mother began duly to relate (as follows) the unpleasant event simultaneously with the news of his father's demise in the tone of breaking a welcome news:—(41) "Actually clad in the bark of trees, my son, and followed by Lakṣmaṇa, the aforesaid prince proceeded to the great forest of Daṇḍaka with Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory)." (42) Filled with apprehension to hear the tidings because of his misgivings about the character of his (elder) brother (Śrī Rāma), and remembering as he did the greatness of his (royal) house, Bharata commenced interrogating her (as follows):—(43) "I hope no property of a Brahman was (wantonly) seized by Śrī Rāma. I am sure no sinless man, whether wealthy or destitute, was killed by him. (44) Nor did the prince long for another's wife, I am sure. (If not), wherefore was my celebrated brother sent into exile to the Daṇḍaka forest?" (45)

अथास्य चपळा माता तत् स्वकर्म यथातथम् । तेनैव स्त्रीस्वभावेन व्याहर्तुमुपचक्रमे ॥४६॥
एवमुक्ता तु कैकेयी भरतेन महात्मना । उवाच वचनं हृष्टा वृथापण्डितमानिनी ॥४७॥
न ब्राह्मणधनं किंचिद्धृतं रामेण कस्यचित् ।
कश्चिन्नाढ्यो दरिद्रो वा तेनापापो विहिंसितः । न रामः परदारान् स चक्षुर्भ्यामपि पश्यति ॥४८॥
मया तु पुत्र श्रुत्वैव रामस्येहाभिषेचनम् । याचितस्ते पिता राज्यं रामस्य च विवासनम् ॥४९॥
स स्ववृत्तिं समास्थाय पिता ते तत् तथाकरोत् । रामस्तु सहसौमित्रिः प्रेषितः सह सीतया ॥५०॥
तमपश्यन् प्रियं पुत्रं महीपाळो महायशाः । पुत्रशोकपरिद्यूनः पञ्चत्वमुपपेदिवान् ॥५१॥
त्वया त्विदानीं धर्मज्ञ राजत्वमवळम्ब्यताम् । त्वत्कृते हि मया सर्वमिदमेवंविधं कृतम् ॥५२॥
मा शोकं मा च संतापं धैर्यमाश्रय पुत्रक । त्वदधीना हि नगरी राज्यं चैतदनामयम् ॥५३॥
तत् पुत्र शीघ्रं विधिना विधिज्ञैर्वसिष्ठमुख्यैः सहितो द्विजेन्द्रैः ।
संकाल्य राजानमदीनसत्त्वमात्मानमुर्व्यामभिषेचयस्व ॥५४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्विसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७२ ॥

Prompted by her feminine (frivolous) nature, which was too well-known, Bharata's capricious mother forthwith began to recount her notorious doing (precisely) as matters stood. (46) Questioned as aforesaid by the high-souled Bharata, Kaikeyī, for her part, who vainly accounted her wise, merrily replied as follows:—(47) "No property whatsoever of a Brahman or anyone (else) was (wantonly) seized by Rāma nor was any innocent man, wealthy or destitute, killed by him. Nor did the celebrated Rāma look on another's wife even with sinless eyes. (48) The moment I heard of Rāma's installation (as Prince Regent) on the throne of Ayodhya, my son, your father was in fact asked by me for the sovereignty (of Ayodhya in your favour) and the banishment of Rāma. (49) Following his own (truthful) nature, your father thereupon did as he was asked (by me). Accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma was accordingly sent into exile along with Sītā. (50) Missing his beloved son (Rāma), and stricken with grief over his separation from that son, the highly illustrious emperor met his end. (51) Let the throne (of Ayodhya) be accepted by you now, O knower of what is right! Indeed all this has been manipulated by me in this wise for your sake. (52) Do not yield to grief nor to remorse, my dear son, but have recourse too firmness. Indeed (the existence of) the city (of Ayodhya) as well as this kingdom, which is free from trouble, is dependent on you. (53) Therefore, speedily performing with due ceremony the funeral rites with respect to the king (your deceased father) with the help of the foremost of Brahmans well-versed in the scriptural ordinance, get yourself installed, my son, as the ruler of the (entire) globe, undepressed in spirits. (54)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-two in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रिसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXIII

Bitterly reproaching Kaikeyī in many ways, and cutting her to the quick by his caustic remarks, Bharata takes a vow before her to bring back Śrī Rāma from the forest, install him on the throne of Ayodhya and wait upon him as an attendant to offend her.

श्रुत्वा च स पितुर्वृत्तं भ्रातरौ च विवासितौ । भरतो दुःखसंतप्त इदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
किं नु कार्यं हतस्येह मम राज्येन शोचतः । विहीनस्याथ पित्रा च भ्रात्रा पितृसमेन च ॥ २ ॥
दुःखे मे दुःखमकरोर्व्रणे क्षारमिवाददाः । राजानं प्रेतभावस्थं कृत्वा राम च तापसम् ॥ ३ ॥
कुलस्य त्वमभावाय कालरात्रिरिवागता । अङ्गारमुपगुह्य स्म पिता मे नावबुद्धवान् ॥ ४ ॥
मृत्युमापादितो राजा त्वया मे पापदर्शिनि । सुखं परिहृतं मोहात् कुलेऽस्मिन् कुलपांसनि ॥ ५ ॥
त्वां प्राप्य हि निता मेऽद्य सत्यसंधो महायशाः । तीव्रदुःखाभिसंतप्तो वृत्तो दशरथो नृपः ॥ ६ ॥
विनाशितो महाराजः पिता मे धर्मवत्सलः । कस्मात् प्रव्राजितो रामः कस्मादेव वनं गतः ॥ ७ ॥

Sore stricken with sorrow to hear the (unwelcome) news about his father, as well as of his brothers (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) having been sent into exile, Bharata replied as follows:—(1) "What object on earth will possibly be gained through sovereignty by me, a wretched being, deprived of his father and (elder) brother,—who was as good as a father,—and (therefore) grieving? (2) Reducing the king to the state of a departed soul and turning Śrī Rāma an ascetic (on top of it), you have brought calamity after calamity to me—rubbed salt as it were into my wound. (3) Like the night of universal dissolution (or Goddess Kālarātri, one of the nine Durgās or manifestations of the Divine Energy associated with the dissolution of the universe), you made your appearance (in my father's house) for the extermination of my race! (Even) on clasping a live coal to his bosom my father did not recognize it (as such). (4) The king, my father, has been consigned to death by you, O woman who perceive evil (even where there is none) and have brought disgrace to your family! Through infatuation the joy of this family has been taken away by you. (5) Indeed having got you (for his wife) my highly illustrious father, King Daśaratha, who was true to his promise and was sore stricken with acute agony (born of separation from his eldest son) has passed away. (6) Wherefore was the emperor, my father, who was (so) lovingly devoted to duty, deprived of his life by you? For what precise reason was Śrī Rāma sent into exile and proceeded to the forest? (7)

कौसल्या च सुमित्रा च पुत्रशोकाभिपीडिते । दुष्करं यदि जीवेतां प्राप्य त्वां जननीं मम ॥८॥
नन्वार्योऽपि च धर्मात्मा त्वयि वृत्तिमनुत्तमाम् । वर्तते गुरुवृत्तिज्ञो यथा मातरि वर्तते ॥९॥
तथा ज्येष्ठा हि मे माता कौसल्या दीर्घदर्शिनी । त्वयि धर्मं समास्थाय भगिन्यामिव वर्तते ॥१०॥
तस्याः पुत्रं महात्मानं चीरवल्कलवाससम् । प्रस्थाप्य वनवासाय कथं पापे न शोचसे ॥११॥
अपापदर्शिनं शूरं कृतात्मानं यशस्विनम् । प्रव्राज्य चीरवसनं किं नु पश्यसि कारणम् ॥१२॥
लुब्धाया विदितो मन्ये न तेऽहं राघवं यथा । तथा ह्यनर्थो राज्यार्थं त्वयाऽऽनीतो महानयम् ॥१३॥
अहं हि पुरुषव्याघ्रावपश्यन् रामलक्ष्मणौ । केन शक्तिप्रभावेण राज्यं रक्षितुमुत्सहे ॥१४॥

"Having got you, my mother (for their co-wife), Kausalyā and Sumitrā too have been tormented with grief caused by separation from their (own) son. They would (indeed) accomplish something hard to accomplish if they survived (any longer). (8) Surely my elder brother (Śrī Rāma) too, whose mind is given to piety and who knows (full well) how to serve his elders, rendered the best services to you as he did to his (own) mother! (9) Even so my seniormost mother, Kausalyā, who takes a long-range view of things, behaved towards you as towards her (own) sister, following (as she does) the principles of right conduct. (10) Having sent her high-souled son, clad in tatters and the bark of trees, into exile in a forest, wherefore do you not grieve, O sinful woman? (11) Having sent into exile, clad in the bark of trees, the illustrious hero who never detected others' sin and had mastered his self, what gain on earth do you expect? (12) To you, who are full of greed (for power and pelf), I am not known I believe, in my reality as to how devoted I am to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). That is why this great tragedy has been enacted by you for the sake of sovereignty. (13) Failing to perceive the two tigers among men, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, by virtue of what strength can I venture to protect the kingdom (of Ayodhya)? (14)

तं हि नित्यं महाराजो बलवन्तं महौजसम् । उपाश्रितोऽभूद् धर्मात्मा मेरुर्मेरुवनं यथा ॥१५॥
सोऽहं कथमिमं भारं महाधुर्यसमुद्यतम् । दम्यो धुरमिवासाद्य सहेयं केन चौजसा ॥१६॥
अथवा मे भवेच्छक्तिर्योगैर्बुद्धिबलेन वा । सकामां न करिष्यामि त्वामहं पुत्रगर्द्धिनीम् ॥१७॥
न मे विकाङ्क्षा जायेत त्यक्तुं त्वां पापनिश्चयाम् । यदि रामस्य नावेक्षा त्वयि स्यान्मातृवत् सदा ॥१८॥
उत्पन्ना तु कथं बुद्धिस्तवेयं पापदर्शिनी । साधुचारित्रविभ्रष्टे पूर्वेषां नो विगर्हिता ॥१९॥
अस्मिन् कुले हि सर्वेषां ज्येष्ठो राज्येऽभिषिच्यते । अपरे भ्रातरस्तस्मिन् प्रवर्तन्ते समाहिताः ॥२०॥
नहि मन्ये नृशंसे त्वं राजधर्ममवेक्षसे । गतिं वा न विजानासि राजवृत्तस्य शाश्वतीम् ॥२१॥

"Even the emperor, whose mind was given to piety, ever depended on (the might of) the powerful Śrī Rāma,—who is possessed of extraordinary strength,—(just) as Mount Meru depends (for its protection against inroads) on the forest grown on it. (15) How and with what stamina shall I, whose only strength is Śrī Rāma, sustain this burden (of kingship) any more than a calf would stand the strain on getting a load, borne with ease by a giant bull? (16) Or (even) if such capacity could be brought out in me through contrivances or through intellectual calibre, I shall never allow you to attain your desired end,—you, who covet sovereignty for your son (*i. e.*, myself). (17) No disinclination would be felt by me (even) in deserting you, a woman of sinful resolve, if Śrī Rāma did not regard you as a mother at all times. (18) How did this idea (of securing the kingdom for a younger brother in supersession of the eldest),—an idea which contemplates evil (in relation to others) and which has been severely condemned by our forbears,—enter your mind at all, O woman fallen from virtuous conduct? (19) Indeed in our house the eldest* of all (brothers) is installed (on the throne). The other brothers devoutly obey him. (20) I believe you do not at all respect the moral code prescribed for kings nor do you know the eternal way of life of kings, O cruel woman! (21)

सततं राजपुत्रेषु ज्येष्ठो राजाभिषिच्यते । राज्ञामेतत् समं तत् स्यादिक्ष्वाकूणां विशेषतः ॥२२॥
तेषां धर्मैकरक्षाणां कुलचारित्रशोभिनाम् । अद्य चारित्रशौटीर्यं त्वां प्राप्य विनिवर्तितम् ॥२३॥
तवापि सुमहाभागे जनेन्द्रकुलपूर्वके । बुद्धिमोहः कथमयं सम्भूतस्त्वयि गर्हितः ॥२४॥
न तु कामं करिष्यामि तवाहं पापनिश्चये । यथा व्यसनमारब्धं जीवितान्तकरं मम ॥२५॥
एष त्विदानीमेवाहमप्रियार्थं तवानघम् । निवर्तयिष्यामि वनाद् भ्रातरं स्वजनप्रियम् ॥२६॥
निवर्तयित्वा रामं च तस्याहं दीप्ततेजसः । दासभूतो भविष्यामि सुस्थितेनान्तरात्मना ॥२७॥
इत्येवमुक्त्वा भरतो महात्मा प्रियेतरैर्वाक्यगणैस्तुदंस्ताम् ।
शोकार्दितश्चापि ननाद भूयः सिंहो यथा मन्दरकन्दरस्थः ॥२८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्रिसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७३ ॥

"Among the sons of a king the eldest (alone) is invariably crowned king. This is a common practice among (all) kings, and it is particularly true of the Ikṣwākus. (22) The self-esteem, born of (loftiness of) character, cherished by the aforesaid kings,—who were protected by their righteousness alone and who shone by virtue of a mode of life befitting their race,—has disappeared today on coming to be associated with you. (23) How has this perversity of reason, contemptible for you, appeared in you too, O exceptionally blessed lady, born of a royal lineage! (24) I will not in any case accomplish your desired object, O woman of sinful resolve, since a calamity which may (eventually) prove fatal to me, has been set on foot by you. (25) In order to give offence to you I shall, however, forthwith cause to return from the forest my sinless (elder) brother (Śrī Rāma), the beloved of his people. (26) Nay, having caused Śrī Rāma to return (from the forest) I shall settle down (in life) with a composed mind, turning a servant of the aforesaid prince of effulgent glory." (27) Having spoken as aforesaid (to his mother), pricking her once more with volleys of piercing words, the high-souled Bharata, even though tormented with grief, roared like a lion ensconced in a cave of Mount Mandara. (28)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-three in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

---

* This is fully supported by Manu, who says:—

ज्येष्ठ एव तु गृह्णीयात्सकलं पैतृकं धनम् । अन्ये तमनुजीवेयुर्यथैव पितरं तथा ॥

"The eldest son alone should inherit the entire property of his father, Others should depend on him as they did on their father (heretofore)."

चतुःसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXIV

Severely reproaching his mother once more, and making up his mind not only to bring back Śrī Rāma from the forest and crown him king but also to go into exile for fourteen years in order to redeem his elder brother's vow, Bharata, who is filled with rage at the thought of the mischief wrought by his mother, cannot contain his grief and falls unconscious to the ground.

तां तथा गर्हयित्वा तु मातरं भरतस्तदा । रोषेण महताऽऽविष्टः पुनरेवाब्रवीद् वचः ॥ १ ॥
राज्याद् भ्रंशस्व कैकेयि नृशंसे दुष्टचारिणि । परित्यक्तासि धर्मेण मा मृतं रुदती भव ॥ २ ॥
किं नु तेऽदूषयद् रामो राजा वा भृशधार्मिकः । ययोर्मृत्युर्विवासश्च त्वत्कृते तुल्यमागतौ ॥ ३ ॥
भ्रूणहत्यामसि प्राप्ता कुलस्यास्य विनाशनात् । कैकेयि नरकं गच्छ मा च तातसलोकताम् ॥ ४ ॥
यत्त्वया हीदृशं पापं कृतं घोरेण कर्मणा । सर्वलोकप्रियं हित्वा ममाप्यापादितं भयम् ॥ ५ ॥
त्वत्कृते मे पिता वृत्तो रामश्चारण्यमाश्रितः । अयशो जीवलोके च त्वयाहं प्रतिपादितः ॥ ६ ॥

Having reproached his mother, Kaikeyī, as aforesaid on that occasion, Bharata, for his part, who was filled with violent anger, spoke once more as follows:—(1) "Be deprived of sovereignty, O cruel Kaikeyī of vicious conduct ! Since you have been forsaken by virtue, keep wailing (for life) taking me to be dead (since the course you have adopted is bound to prove fatal to me). (2) What interest of yours, I wonder, did Śrī Rāma or the exceedingly pious king mar, whose banishment and death (severally) came about at one and the same time because of you ? (3) By having brought destruction to this family you have incurred the sin of having killed a Brahman studying the Veda. Proceed you (therefore) to hell (after death), O Kaikeyī, and not to heaven in common with my father (your husband, the virtuous King Daśaratha). (4) Since such a (gross) sin has been incurred by you through a terrible act (in the form of taking the life of a pious husband and sending into exile a loving and virtuous son), peril (of being disowned by my loving brother) has been brought by you to me as well by banishing a prince who is the beloved of all people. (5) Because of you my father has joined the majority, while Śrī Rāma has taken up his abode in the forest, and I too have been subjected to ignominy in the world of mortals by you. (6)

मातृरूपे ममामित्रे नृशंसे राज्यकामुके । न तेऽहमभिभाष्योऽस्मि दुर्वृत्ते पतिघातिनि ॥ ७ ॥
कौसल्या च सुमित्रा च याश्चान्या मम मातरः । दुःखेन महताऽऽविष्टास्त्वां प्राप्य कुलदूषिणीम् ॥ ८ ॥
न त्वमश्वपतेः कन्या धर्मराजस्य धीमतः । राक्षसी तत्र जातासि कुलप्रध्वंसिनी पितुः ॥ ९ ॥
यत् त्वया धार्मिको रामो नित्यं सत्यपरायणः । वनं प्रस्थापितो वीरः पितापि त्रिदिवं गतः ॥ १० ॥
यत्प्रधानासि तत् पापं मयि पित्रा विना कृते । भ्रातृभ्यां च परित्यक्ते सर्वलोकस्य चाप्रिये ॥ ११ ॥
कौसल्यां धर्मसंयुक्तां वियुक्तां पापनिश्चये । कृत्वा कं प्राप्स्यसे ह्यद्य लोकं निरयगामिनि ॥ १२ ॥

"I ought not to be spoken to by you, O cruel woman of evil conduct and covetous of sovereignty, who have killed your (own) husband and are my enemy in the guise of a mother ! (7) Having got you, the disgrace of your family, (for a co-wife), Kausalyā and Sumitrā and my other (step-) mothers too have been filled with great agony. (8) (Surely) you are not the daughter of the virtuous and wise King Aśwapati, but an ogress sprung from his loins, who has brought complete ruin to my father's race. (9) Since the virtuous hero, Śrī Rāma, who is ever devoted to truth, has been sent into exile to the forest by you and my father too has departed for heaven because of you, the sin that has been chiefly incurred by you thereby has been visited on me, who have (conseqnently) been deprived of my father, nay, abandoned by my brothers (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) and have become unpopular with the whole world. (10-11) Indeed, having rendered Kausalyā, who is wedded to piety, desolate (by depriving her of her husband and only son), O woman of sinful resolve and doomed to perdition, what realm (other than the infernal regions) will you attain now (after death) ? (12)

किं नावबुध्यसे क्रूरे नियतं बन्धुसंश्रयम् । ज्येष्ठं पितृसमं रामं कौसल्यायात्मसम्भवम् ॥१३॥
अङ्गप्रत्यङ्गजः पुत्रो हृदयाच्चाभिजायते । तस्मात् प्रियतरो मातुः प्रिया एव तु बान्धवाः ॥१४॥
अन्यदा किल धर्मज्ञा सुरभिः सुरसम्मता । वहमानौ ददर्शोर्व्यां पुत्रौ विगतचेतसौ ॥१५॥
तावर्धदिवसं श्रान्तौ दृष्ट्वा पुत्रौ महीतले । रुरोद पुत्रशोकेन बाष्पपर्याकुलेक्षणम् ॥१६॥
अधस्ताद् व्रजतस्तस्याः सुरराज्ञो महात्मनः । बिन्दवः पतिता गात्रे सूक्ष्माः सुरभिगन्धिनः ॥१७॥
निरीक्षमाणस्तां शक्रो ददर्श सुरभिं स्थिताम् । आकाशे विष्ठितां दीनां रुदतीं भृशदुःखिताम् ॥१८॥

"Did you not cognize Śrī Rāma, born of Kausalyā's own womb, to be my eldest brother and (therefore) as good as my father, self-controlled and the asylum of his kinsfolk, O cruel woman ? (13) A son takes his shape from (the essence of) the various primary and secondary limbs of his father (in the form of his generative fluid) and the heart of his mother (which is the fount of her ovum). Hence he is dearer (than all others) to his mother, whereas her (other) relations are simply dear (to her). (14) On one occasion (in the hoary past), so the tradition goes, Surabhi (the cow of plenty), who knows what is right and is adored by gods, saw a pair of bullocks (her own sons) fallen unconscious on the ground while drawing the plough. (15) Seeing her two sons lying on the ground exhausted due to their having toiled (hard) for half the day, Surabhi wept for grief born of anxiety for her sons, her eyes blinded with tears. (16) Her sweet-scented tear-drops fell on the person of the high-souled Indra, (the ruler of gods), who happened to pass below. (17) Looking upwards Indra beheld the said Surabhi standing weeping in the heavens in a miserable plight, sore afflicted. (18)

तां दृष्ट्वा शोकसंतप्तां वज्रपाणिर्यशस्विनीम् । इन्द्रः प्राञ्जलिरुद्विग्नः सुरराजोऽब्रवीद् वचः ॥१९॥
भयं कच्चिन्न चास्मासु कुतश्चिद् विद्यते महत् । कुतोनिमित्तः शोकस्ते ब्रूहि सर्वहितैषिणि ॥२०॥
एवमुक्ता तु सुरभिः सुरराजेन धीमता । प्रत्युवाच ततो धीरा वाक्यं वाक्यविशारदा ॥२१॥
शान्तं पापं न वः किंचित् कुतश्चिदमराधिप । अहं तु मग्नौ शोचामि स्वपुत्रौ विषमे स्थितौ ॥२२॥
एतौ दृष्ट्वा कृशौ दीनौ सूर्यरश्मिप्रतापितौ । वध्यमानौ बलीवर्दौ कर्षकेण दुरात्मना ॥२३॥
मम कायात् प्रसूतौ हि दुःखितौ भारपीडितौ । यौ दृष्ट्वा परितप्येऽहं नास्ति पुत्रसमः प्रियः ॥२४॥

"Perturbed to find the illustrious cow agonized through grief, Indra, the ruler of gods, who carried a thunderbolt in one of his hands, spoke with joined palms as follows:—(19) 'I hope there is no grave danger to us (heavenly beings) from any quarter (whatsoever). Now tell me, O well-wisher of all, what is the occasion for your grief ?' (20) Addressed in the aforesaid words by the wise Indra (the ruler of gods), the intelligent Surabhi for her part, who was adept in speaking, forthwith replied (in the following words):—(21) 'Heaven forbid! There is no danger whatsoever to you from any quarter, O ruler of immortals ! I, however, grieve to see plunged in adversity a pair of bullocks, my own progeny, emaciated and miserable, scorched by the sun's rays and (on top of it) being beaten by an evil-minded farmer. (22-23) I feel sore distressed to find the two bullocks, who are sprung from my own womb, afflicted and oppressed with a (heavy) load; for there is none so dear (to a mother) as a son.' (24)

यस्याः पुत्रसहस्रैस्तु कृत्स्नं व्याप्तमिदं जगत् । तां दृष्ट्वा रुदतीं शक्रो न सुतान्मन्यते परम् ॥२५॥
इन्द्रो ह्यश्रुनिपातं तं स्वगात्रे पुण्यगन्धिनम् । सुरभिं मन्यते दृष्ट्वा भूयसीं तामिहेश्वरः ॥२६॥
समाप्रतिमवृत्ताया लोकधारणकाम्यया । श्रीमत्या गुणमुख्यायाः स्वभावपरिचेष्टया ॥२७॥
यस्याः पुत्रसहस्राणि सापि शोचति कामधुक् । किं पुनर्या विना रामं कौसल्या वर्तयिष्यति ॥२८॥
एकपुत्रा च साध्वी च विवत्सेयं त्वया कृता । तस्मात् त्वं सततं दुःखं प्रेत्य चेह च लप्स्यसे ॥२९॥
अहं त्वपचितिं भ्रातुः पितुश्च सकलामिमाम् । वर्धनं यशसश्चापि करिष्यामि न संशयः ॥३०॥

"Seeing Surabhi,—by whose countless offsprings (in the shape of the bovine race) the whole creation is filled,—weeping, Indra reckoned none as dearer (to a mother) than a son. (25) Perceiving that dropping of tears, which emitted a sweet odour, (from the eyes of Surabhi) on his own person, the powerful Indra recognized the said Surabhi to be the greatest (of all) in this world. (26) When even the celebrated cow of plenty—whose conduct (in the world) is uniformly beneficent to all and is without parallel (in this respect), actuated as she is by the desire to sustain the world, (nay) who is rich in the power to grant the desire of all (whosoever approaches her) and is foremost in her virtue (of truthfulness etc.) and who is blessed with numberless offsprings—grieves (for them) as an outward expression of her natural love (for her progeny), how much more will Kausalyā, who will (have to) drag her existence without Śrī Rāma (her only son) ? (27-28) Kausalyā, who is blessed with one son (only) and is a virtuous lady to boot, has been deprived of her son by you. Hence you will incessantly undergo suffering here as well as after death. (29) I for my part shall offer worship as follows (in the form of bringing him back from the forest and restoring his patrimony to him) to my (elder) brother (Śrī Rāma) and entire worship (in the form of all obsequial rites) to my father and also enhance their reputation: there is no doubt about it. (30)

आनाय्य च महाबाहुं कोसलेन्द्रं महाबलम् । स्वयमेव प्रवेक्ष्यामि वनं मुनिनिषेवितम् ॥३१॥
नह्यहं पापसंकल्पे पापे पापं त्वया कृतम् । शक्तो धारयितुं पौरैरश्रुकण्ठैर्निरीक्षितः ॥३२॥
सा त्वमग्निं प्रविश वा स्वयं वा विश दण्डकान् । रज्जुं बद्ध्वाथवा कण्ठे नहि तेऽन्यत् परायणम् ॥३३॥
अहमप्यवनीं प्राप्ते रामे सत्यपराक्रमे । कृतकृत्यो भविष्यामि विप्रवासितकल्मषः ॥३४॥
इति नाग इवारण्ये तोमराङ्कुशतोदितः । पपात भुवि संक्रुद्धो निःश्वसन्निव पन्नगः ॥३५॥

संरक्तनेत्रः शिथिलाम्बरस्तथा विधूतसर्वाभरणः परंतपः ।
बभूव भूमौ पतितो नृपात्मजः शचीपतेः केतुरिवोत्सवक्षये ॥३६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुस्सप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७४ ॥

"Having caused Śrī Rāma (the ruler of the kingdom of Kosala)—who is distinguished by long arms and is possessed of great might—to return (to Ayodhya), I shall myself retire (in his place) to the forest frequented by hermits (and thus save him from the sin of having violated his vow). (31) Looked on by the citizens with their throat full of tears, I shall surely not be able to brook the sin perpetrated by you (in the shape of sending the eldest brother into exile and securing the kingdom in favour of a younger one), O wicked woman of sinful resolve! (32) Having deliberately committed this sin, enter you the fire or retire yourself to the Daṇḍaka forest or (again) end your life by tying a cord round your neck (and throttling yourself): there is no other course left for you. (33) I too shall have washed my stain and accomplished my purpose (only) when Śrī Rāma of unfailing prowess has returned to his native land." (34) Having spoken thus and hissing, highly enraged, like a serpent, Bharata dropped (unconscious) to the ground like an elephant pricked with a javelin and a goad in a forest. (35) With deep red eyes, his garment loosened and all his jewels tossed about, the prince (Bharata), the tormentor of his foes, fell to the ground like a banner raised in honour of Indra and let down at the end of the festival. (36)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-four in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXV

swearing that what had already come to pass in the shape of exile of Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa and the resultant death of the King-Emperor was not to his liking, Bharata moves with Śatrughna to the apartments of his stepmother, Kausalyā, who speaks unkindly to him taunting him with the remark that his mother, Kaikeyī, had rendered good offices to him by securing for him the kingdom of Kosala sought after by him. Bharata, however, politely denies on a number of oaths all complicity in the machinations of his vile mother. Thereby coming to know his heart, the guileless Kausalyā places Bharata on her lap and weeps bitterly.

दीर्घकालात् समुत्थाय संज्ञां लब्ध्वा स वीर्यवान् । नेत्राभ्यामश्रुपूर्णाभ्यां दीनामुद्वीक्ष्य मातरम् ॥ १ ॥
सोऽमात्यमध्ये भरतो जननीमभ्यकुत्सयत् । राज्यं न कामये जातु मन्त्रये नापि मातरम् ॥ २ ॥

अभिषेकं न जानामि योऽभूद् राजा समीक्षितः । विप्रकृष्टे ह्यहं देशे शत्रुघ्नसहितोऽभवम् ॥ ३ ॥
वनवासं न जानामि रामस्याहं महात्मनः । विवासनं च सौमित्रेः सीतायाश्च यथाभवत् ॥ ४ ॥
तथैव क्रोशतस्तस्य भरतस्य महात्मनः । कौसल्या शब्दमाज्ञाय सुमित्रा मिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ५ ॥

Regaining his consciousness after a long time the said Bharata, who was full of valour, got up and, casting a glance at his mother, who looked miserable (at the unexpected turn of events) with her eyes full of tears, reproached her right and left in the midst of the ministers (who had evidently collected there on coming to know of Bharata's arrival) and said, "I never coveted the throne nor did I (ever) hold (any) consultation with my mother. (1-2) Nor did I know (anything) about the installation (of Śrī Rāma as Prince Regent) which was contemplated by the king; for I happened to be (at that time) in a distant land with Śatrughna (my brother). (3) Nor (again) was I aware of the residence in the forest of the high-souled Śrī Rāma nor how the exile of Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) and Sītā came about." (4) Recognizing the voice of the celebrated Bharata of noble mind, who was lamenting as aforesaid, Kausalyā spoke to Sumitrā as follows:—(5)

आगतः क्रूरकार्यायाः कैकेय्या भरतः सुतः । तमहं द्रष्टुमिच्छामि भरतं दीर्घदर्शिनम् ॥ ६ ॥
एवमुक्त्वा सुमित्रां तां विवर्णवदना कृशा । प्रतस्थे भरतो यत्र वेपमाना विचेतना ॥ ७ ॥
स तु राजात्मजश्चापि शत्रुघ्नसहितस्तदा । प्रतस्थे भरतो येन कौसल्याया निवेशनम् ॥ ८ ॥
ततः शत्रुघ्नभरतौ कौसल्यां प्रेक्ष्य दुःखितौ । पर्यष्वजेतां दुःखार्तां पतितां नष्टचेतनाम् ॥ ९ ॥
रुदन्तौ रुदती दुःखात् समेत्यार्या मनस्विनी । भरतं प्रत्युवाचेदं कौसल्या भृशदुःखिता ॥१०॥

"(I think) Bharata, the son of Kaikeyī of cruel deeds, has returned (from his maternal grandfather's). I long to see the aforesaid Bharata, who takes a long-range view of things." (6) Speaking as aforesaid to the said Sumitrā, the pale-faced and emaciated lady, who looked absent-minded, advanced trembling to the place where Bharata was. (7) Nay, accompanied by Śatrughna, the said prince (Bharata) too, on the other side, proceeded that (very) moment along the route by which Kausalyā's apartments could be reached. (8) Perceiving Kausalyā, who was stricken with sorrow, and had fallen unconscious (on the way), the two afflicted brothers, Śatrughna and Bharata, hugged her. (9) Embracing (in return) the two brothers, who were weeping through agony, the noble and high-minded Kausalyā, who was sore distressed, addressed Bharata as follows:—(10)

इदं ते राज्यकामस्य राज्यं प्राप्तमकण्टकम् । सम्प्राप्तं बत कैकेय्या शीघ्रं क्रूरेण कर्मणा ॥११॥
प्रस्थाप्य चीरवसनं पुत्रं मे वनवासिनम् । कैकेयी कं गुणं तत्र पश्यति क्रूरदर्शिनी ॥१२॥
क्षिप्रं मामपि कैकेयी प्रस्थापयितुमर्हति । हिरण्यनाभो यत्रास्ते सुतो मे सुमहायशाः ॥१३॥
अथवा स्वयमेवाहं सुमित्रानुचरा सुखम् । अग्निहोत्रं पुरस्कृत्य प्रस्थास्ये यत्र राघवः ॥१४॥
कामं वा स्वयमेवाद्य तत्र मां नेतुमर्हसि । यत्रासौ पुरुषव्याघ्रस्तप्यते मे सुतस्तपः ॥१५॥
इदं हि तव विस्तीर्णं धनधान्यसमाचितम् । हस्त्यश्वरथसम्पूर्णं राज्यं निर्यातितं तया ॥१६॥
इत्यादिबहुभिर्वाक्यैः क्रूरैः सम्भर्त्सितोऽनघः । विव्यथे भरतोऽतीव व्रणे तुद्येव सूचिना ॥१७॥
पपात चरणौ तस्यास्तदा सम्भ्रान्तचेतनः । विलप्य बहुधासंज्ञो लब्धसंज्ञस्ततः स्थितः ॥१८॥
एवं विलपमानां तां प्राञ्जलिर्भरतस्तदा । कौसल्यां प्रत्युवाचेदं शोकैर्बहुभिरावृताम् ॥१९॥

"Enjoy this kingdom, devoid of enemies, obtained by you, who coveted it. Alas, it has been promptly secured (for you) by Kaikeyī through a cruel deed (in the shape of banishing Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa). (11) What good did the cruel-eyed Kaikeyī expect by sending (into exile) as she did my son (Rāma) as an ascetic clad in the bark of trees ? (12) Kaikeyī ought to send away soon me as well to the place where my exceptionally illustrious son with a golden navel (a distinguishing mark of Lord Viṣṇu) is sojourning. (13) Or, placing the sacrificial fire* (carried by a Brahman) at my head and followed by Sumitrā, I shall myself depart happily along the route by which Rāma has proceeded (to the forest). (14) Or you ought personally to take me now freely to the place where my aforesaid son, a (veritable) tiger among men, is practising austerities. (15) This extensive kingdom overflowing with riches and food-grains and fully equipped with elephants, horses and chariots has actually been conferred on you by her (your mother)." (16) Bitterly reproached in many such cruel words, the sinless Bharata felt extremely pained as he would when pricked with a needle in his wound. (17) Having lost his consciousness, his mind being utterly confused (to hear the taunting words of Kausalyā), Bharata presently regained his senses and, wailing in many ways, then fell at her feet. (18) To Kausalyā, overwhelmed with griefs of many kinds and lamenting as aforesaid, Bharata then replied with joined palms as follows:—(19)

आर्ये कस्मादजानन्तं गर्हसे मामकल्मषम् । विपुलां च मम प्रीतिं स्थितां जानासि राघवे ॥२०॥
कृतशास्त्रानुगा बुद्धिर्मा भूत् तस्य कदाचन । सत्यसंधः सतां श्रेष्ठो यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥२१॥
प्रैष्यं पापीयसां यातु सूर्यं च प्रति मेहतु । हन्तु पादेन गाः सुप्ता यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥२२॥
कारयित्वा महत् कर्म भर्ता भृत्यमनर्थकम् । अधर्मो योऽस्य सोऽस्यास्तु यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥२३॥
परिपालयमानस्य राज्ञो भूतानि पुत्रवत् । ततस्तु द्रुह्यतां पापं यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥२४॥
बलिषड्भागमुद्धृत्य नृपस्यारक्षितुः प्रजाः । अधर्मो योऽस्य सोऽस्यास्तु यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥२५॥
संश्रुत्य च तपस्विभ्यः सत्रे वै यज्ञदक्षिणाम् । तां चापलपतां पापं यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥२६॥

"Wherefore do you reproach me, O noble lady, guileless as I am and did not know anything (about Śrī Rāma's exile before I returned to Ayodhya)? Nay, you know my great love borne towards Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (20) Let his judgment never follow (the teachings of) the scriptures as taught by his preceptor, with whose concurrence my elder brother, who is true to his promise and is the foremost of the virtuous, has gone into exile. (21) Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has gone into exile suffer the lot of a servant of men belonging to the lowest stratum of society, incur the sin of answering the calls of nature facing the sun and reap the consequences of kicking cows lying asleep. (22) Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has gone into exile incur the sin that attaches to a master who robs his servant of his resources after getting him accomplish a great deed (for him). (23) Let the sin attaching to those bearing enmity to a king protecting his subjects as his (own) offspring, be incurred by him with whose concurrence my elder brother has gone into exile. (24) Let the sin that attaches to a king who fails to protect the people even after collecting the land revenue in the form of one-sixth of the produce be incurred by him with whose concurrence my elder brother has gone into exile. (25) Let the sin attaching to those withholding payment of the sacrificial fee (even) after promising it to the priests practising austerities and officiating at a sacrifice be incurred by him with whose concurrence my elder brother has gone into exile. (26)

---

* The king's seniormost wife alone is entitled to preserve and worship the sacred fire in the absence or on the death of her husband.

हस्त्यश्वरथसम्बाधे युद्धे शस्त्रसमाकुले । मा स्म कार्षीत् सतां धर्मं यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥२७॥
उपदिष्टं सुसूक्ष्मार्थं शास्त्रं यत्नेन धीमता । स नाशयतु दुष्टात्मा यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥२८॥
मा च तं व्यूढबाह्वंसं चन्द्रभास्करतेजसम् । द्राक्षीद् राज्यस्थमासीनं यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥२९॥
पायसं कृसरं छागं वृथा सोऽश्नातु निर्घृणः । गुरूंश्चाप्यवजानातु यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥३०॥
गवां स्पृशतु पादेन गुरून् परिवदेत च । मित्रे द्रुह्येत सोऽत्यर्थं यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥३१॥
विश्वासात् कथितं किंचित् परिवादं मिथः क्वचित् । विवृणोतु स दुष्टात्मा यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥३२॥

"Let the sin attaching to the man who fails to observe the code of warfare followed by the virtuous on a field of battle crowded with elephants, horses and chariots and thick with weapons (of all kinds) be incurred by him with whose concurrence my elder brother has gone into exile. (27) Let that wicked soul with whose concurrence my elder brother has gone into exile forget the sacred lore expounding the most esoteric truths, taught with (great) pains by an enlightened preceptor. (28) Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the forest) not (live to) see Śrī Rāma of muscular arms and shoulders, and possessing the splendour of the moon and the sun, willing to accept the kingship and installed (on the throne). (29) Let that merciless fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) incur the sin of partaking or milk boiled with rice and sugar, seasoned rice boiled with sesame seeds and Moong (a kind of kidney bean), and goat-milk in vain (without offering them in the first instance to the almighty Lord, gods and manes etc.) and of showing disrespect to his elders (by failing to rise on their arrival and greet them). (30) Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the forest) incur the sin of touching the body of cows with his feet, reviling his elders and bearing deep-rooted malice to a friend. (31) Let that evil-minded fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the forest) incur the sin of revealing to someone (else) a fault of another confessed in private out of reliance (that he will not divulge the secret before anyone). (32)

अकर्ता चाकृतज्ञश्च त्यक्तात्मा निरपत्रपः । लोके भवतु विद्विष्टो यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥३३॥
पुत्रैर्दासैश्च भृत्यैश्च स्वगृहे परिवारितः । स एको मृष्टमश्नातु यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥३४॥
अप्राप्य सदृशान् दारानंनपत्यः प्रमीयताम् । अनवाप्य क्रियां धर्म्यां यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥३५॥
माऽऽत्मनः संततिं द्राक्षीत् स्वेषु दारेषु दुःखितः । आयुः समग्रमप्राप्य यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥३६॥
राजस्त्रीबालवृद्धानां वधे यत् पापमुच्यते । भृत्यत्यागे च यत् पापं तत् पापं प्रतिपद्यताम् ॥३७॥
लाक्षया मधुमांसेन लोहेन च विषेण च । सदैव बिभृयाद् भृत्यान् यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥३८॥
संग्रामे समुपोढे च शत्रुपक्षभयंकरे । पलायमानो वध्येत यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥३९॥

"Let the fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) never (be in a position to) return a service;

(nay) let him prove ungrateful and shameless, let him be shunned (by good men) and hated by all. (33) Let the fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) incur the sin of partaking of a savoury dish alone, at his own home, though surrounded by (a number of) sons, servants and dependants. (34) Let the fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) die issueless failing to secure a wife becoming of him (in point of pedigree, disposition and so on) and (in this way) not enjoying the privilege of performing sacred duties (like Agnihotra etc., which can be performed only by a married couple). (35) Let the fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) not behold (the face of) a (male) child through his (wedded) wife and die full of agony without attaining the full age (of a hundred years). (36) Let him incur the same sin which is declared as attaching to the act of killing a ruler, woman, infant or aged man and forsaking a dependant. (37) Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) always support his dependants through sale of lacquer, honey and flesh, iron and poison (which is prohibited in the Śāstras)*. (38) Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) be killed while fleeing at a time when a battle inspiring terror into the adversaries has commenced. (39)

कपालपाणिः पृथिवीमटतां चीरसंवृतः । भिक्षमाणो यथोन्मत्तो यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥४०॥
मद्यप्रसक्तो भवतु स्त्रीष्वक्षेषु च नित्यशः । कामक्रोधाभिभूतश्च यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥४१॥
मास्य धर्मे मनो भूयादधर्मं स निषेवताम् । अपात्रवर्षी भवतु यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥४२॥
संचितान्यस्य वित्तानि विविधानि सहस्रशः । दस्युभिर्विप्रलुप्यन्तां यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥४३॥
उभे संध्ये शयानस्य यत् पापं परिकल्प्यते । तच्च पापं भवेत् तस्य यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥४४॥
यदग्निदायके पापं यत् पापं गुरुतल्पगे । मित्रद्रोहे च यत् पापं तत् पापं प्रतिपद्यताम् ॥४५॥
देवतानां पितॄणां च मातापित्रोस्तथैव च । मा स्म कार्षीत् स शुश्रूषां यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥४६॥

"Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed for the woods roam about like a madman, clad in tatters and begging alms, bowl in hand. (40) Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) be given over from day to day to wine as well as to women and dice and overpowered by lust and anger. (41) Let the man with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) indulge in unrighteousness and shower his wealth on the undeserving and let his mind never take delight in piety. (42) Let the possessions of every description, accumulated in thousands, of the fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) be looted by robbers. (43) Let that (very) sin which is concluded as attaching to a man who sleeps during both the twilights be incurred by him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods). (44) Let him incur that (very) sin which attaches to the man who practises arson, to him who violates the bed of his teacher and to the fellow who plays a friend foul. (45) Let the fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) not (have an opportunity to) do service to gods (in the form of Agnihotra etc.) and to the manes (in the form of periodical Śrāddha) and likewise to his (living) parents. (46)

---

* A Smṛti text says :—

लाक्षालवणमांसानि वर्जनीयानि विक्रये ।

"Lacquer, salt and flesh should be eschewed in sale."

सतां लोकात् सतां कीर्त्याः सज्जुष्टात् कर्मणस्तथा । भ्रश्यतु क्षिप्रमद्यैव यस्यार्स्योऽनुमते गतः ॥४७॥
अपास्य मातृशुश्रूषामनर्थे सोऽवतिष्ठताम् । दीर्घबाहुर्महावक्षा यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥४८॥
बहुभृत्यो दरिद्रश्च ज्वररोगसमन्वितः । समायात् सततं क्लेशं यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥४९॥
आशामाशंसमानानां दीनानामूर्ध्वचक्षुषाम् । अर्थिनां वितथां कुर्याद् यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥५०॥
मायया रमतां नित्यं पुरुषः पिशुनोऽशुचिः । राज्ञो भीतस्त्वधर्मात्मा यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥५१॥
ऋतुस्नातां सतीं भार्यामृतुकालानुरोधिनीम् । अतिवर्तेत दुष्टात्मा यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥५२॥

"Let the man with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) forfeit this very day, nay, at once (his claim to) the region inhabited by the virtuous (after their death), forfeit (his claim to) the reputation enjoyed by good men and fall from the course of conduct followed by the righteous. (47) Let the fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother, distinguished by long arms and a broad chest, has departed (for the woods) be devoted to the evil path, giving up service to his mother. (48) Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) be a pauper though having many dependants (to support); let him be seized with ailment in the form of fever and suffer hardship continually. (49) Let the man with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) falsify the hopes of destitute suppliants uttering his praises and looking upwards (in his face in expectancy). (50) Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) ever delight in deception, remaining a backbiter and impure and afraid of the king (all his life), his mind being given to unrighteousness. (5) Let the evil-minded fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) ignore his chaste wife who has attained purity after menstruation (and is thus fit to conceive) and approaches him (for union), the period being favourable for procreation. (52)

विप्रलुप्तप्रजातस्य दुष्कृतं ब्राह्मणस्य यत् । तदेतत् प्रतिपद्येत यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥५३॥
ब्राह्मणायोद्यतां पूजां विहन्तु कलुषेन्द्रियः । बालवत्सां च गां दोग्धु यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥५४॥
धर्मदारान् परित्यज्य परदारान् निषेवताम् । त्यक्तधर्मरतिर्मूढो यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥५५॥
पानीयदूषके पापं तथैव विषदायके । यत्तदेकः स लभतां यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥५६॥
तृषार्ते सति पानीये विप्रलम्भेन योजयन् । यत् पापं लभते तत् स्याद् यस्यार्स्योऽनुमते गतः ॥५७॥
भक्त्या विवदमानेषु मार्गमाश्रित्य पश्यतः । तेन पापेन युज्येत यस्यार्योऽनुमते गतः ॥५८॥

"Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) incur that very sin which attaches to a Brahman whose offsprings have perished (for lack of nourishment). (53) Let that man of sinful mind with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) interrupt the worship going to be offered to a Brahman (by another) and milk a cow which calved less than ten days ago. (54) Let the fool with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) enjoy another's wife, forsaking his lawful wife and having given up his love for piety. (55) Let the fellow with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) incur all at once the sin that attaches to him who defiles the water (of a well or tank) as well as that which attaches to one who administers poison. (56) Let the sin which a man disappointing a person oppressed with thirst by recourse to deception (in the form of giving a false report denying the presence of water); even though there is water (with him), attach to him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods). (57) Let him with whose concurrence my elder brother has departed (for the woods) be held guilty of the same sin which attaches to a man standing on the road and witnessing a dispute with partiality for one of the disputing parties." (58)

एवमाश्वासयन्नेव दुःखार्तोऽनुपपात ह । विहीनां पतिपुत्राभ्यां कौसल्यां पार्थिवात्मजः ॥५९॥
तदा तं शपथैः कष्टैः शपमानमचेतनम् । भरतं शोकसंतप्तं कौसल्या वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥६०॥
मम दुःखमिदं पुत्र भूयः समुपजायते । शपथैः शपमानो हि प्राणानुपरुणत्सि मे ॥६१॥
दिष्ट्या न चलितो धर्मादात्मा ते सहलक्षणः । वत्स सत्यप्रतिज्ञो हि सतां लोकानवाप्स्यसि ॥६२॥
इत्युक्त्वा चाङ्कमानीय भरतं भ्रातृवत्सलम् । परिष्वज्य महाबाहुं रुरोद भृशदुःखिता ॥६३॥
एवं विलपमानस्य दुःखार्तस्य महात्मनः । मोहाच्च शोकसंरम्भाद् बभूव लुलितं मनः ॥६४॥
लालप्यमानस्य विचेतनस्य प्रनष्टबुद्धेः पतितस्य भूमौ ।
मुहुर्मुहुर्निःश्वसतश्च दीर्घं सा तस्य शोकेन जगाम रात्रिः ॥६५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७५ ॥

Even while reassuring as aforesaid Kausalyā, who was bereft (both) of her husband and son, the prince (Bharata), they say, fell to the ground, stricken as he was with agony. (59) Thereupon Kausalyā spoke as follows to Bharata, who was solemnly pleading his innocence by means of oaths that were hard to take and had become unconscious, sore stricken as he was with grief:—(60) "The present agony of mine, my son, is aggravated all the more inasmuch as you are choking my breath while solemnly pleading your innocence by means of oaths. (61) Luckily enough your mind, endowed as it is with excellences, has not deviated from righteousness. Since you are true to your promise you will attain to the realms of the virtuous, my child!" (62) Saying so and placing the mighty-armed Bharata, who was (so) fond of his brother, on her lap, and embracing him, Kausalyā (who felt sore distressed) wept (aloud). (63) The mind of the high-souled Bharata, who was wailing as aforesaid, stricken as he was with sorrow, got agitated through infatuation and excess of grief. (64) While Bharata was lamenting thus and lay fallen unconscious on the ground, sighing again and again through grief, his power of judgment having been lost, the aforesaid night passed. (65)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-five in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

षट्सप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXVI

Removing his father's dead body from the vessel full of oil and cremating it with the help of articles befitting an emperor, and offering libations of water to the spirit of the deceased on the bank of the Sarayu as enjoined by Vasiṣṭha, Bharata returns to Ayodhya

तमेवं शोकसंतप्तं भरतं कैकयीसुतम् । उवाच वदतां श्रेष्ठो वसिष्ठः श्रेष्ठवागृषिः ॥ १ ॥
अलं शोकेन भद्रं ते राजपुत्र महायशः । प्राप्तकालं नरपतेः कुरु संयानमुत्तमम् ॥ २ ॥
वसिष्ठस्य वचः श्रुत्वा भरतो धरणीं गतः । प्रेतकृत्यानि सर्वाणि कारयामास धर्मवित् ॥ ३ ॥
उद्धृत्य तैलसंसेकात् स तु भूमौ निवेशितम् । आपीतवर्णवदनं प्रसुप्तमिव भूमिपम् ॥ ४ ॥
संवेश्य शयने चाग्र्ये नानारत्नपरिष्कृते । ततो दशरथं पुत्रो विललाप सुदुःखितः ॥ ५ ॥
किं ते व्यवसितं राजन् प्रोषिते मय्यनागते । विवास्य रामं धर्मज्ञं लक्ष्मणं च महाबलम् ॥ ६ ॥
क्व यास्यसि महाराज हित्वेमं दुःखितं जनम् । हीनं पुरुषसिंहेन रामेणाक्लिष्टकर्मणा ॥ ७ ॥
योगक्षेमं तु तेऽव्यग्रं कोऽस्मिन् कल्पयिता पुरे । त्वयि प्रयाते स्वस्तात रामे च वनमाश्रिते ॥ ८ ॥
विधवा पृथिवी राजंस्त्वया हीना न राजते । हीनचन्द्रेव रजनी नगरी प्रतिभाति माम् ॥ ९ ॥

To Bharata, the son of Kaikeyī, who was sore stricken with grief as aforesaid, Sage Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of speakers, spoke (as follows) in a most polite language :—(1) "Have done with grief, O highly illustrious prince! May good betide you! Perform (now) in an excellent way the funeral of the (deceased) king, which is (now) overdue." (2) Hearing the admonition of Vasiṣṭha, Bharata, who knew what is right, fell prostrate and ordered all obsequies (concerning his father) to be taken in hand. (3) Taking (the dead body of) the king out of the vessel in which he lay immersed in oil, and placing Daśaratha,—who was (first) laid on the ground and, though pale-faced, looked as though he were fast asleep,—on an exquisite bier decked with various jewels, his son (Bharata) lamented (as follows), sore distressed as he was :—(4-5) "Having sent into exile Śrī Rāma as well as Lakṣmaṇa, who is possessed of great strength, at a time when I was away from home and had not yet returned, what did you intend to do, O king, knowing as you did what is right? (6) Where will you go abandoning this distressed servant (of yours), (already) bereft of Śrī Rāma, a (veritable) lion among men, who does great deeds without (the least) exertion, O great king? (7) Now that you have departed for heaven, O dear father, and Śrī Rāma has retired to the woods, (I wonder) who will quietly meet the needs of the people and ensure the safety of their person and property in this capital (of yours)? (8) Bereft of you and (thus) deprived of its lord, the earth does not look charming (any more); (nay), the city (too) appears to me (cheerless) as a night bereft of the moon." (9)

एवं विलपमानं तं भरतं दीनमानसम् । अब्रवीद् वचनं भूयो वसिष्ठस्तु महामुनिः ॥१०॥
प्रेतकार्याणि यान्यस्य कर्तव्यानि विशाम्पतेः । तान्यव्यग्रं महाबाहो क्रियन्तामविचारितम् ॥११॥
तथेति भरतो वाक्यं वसिष्ठस्याभिपूज्य तत् । ऋत्विक्पुरोहिताचार्यांस्त्वरयामास सर्वशः ॥१२॥

ये त्वग्नयो नरेन्द्रस्य अग्न्यगाराद् बहिष्कृताः । ऋत्विग्भिर्याजकैश्चैव ते हूयन्ते यथाविधि ॥१३॥
शिबिकायामथारोप्य राजानं गतचेतनम् । बाष्पकण्ठा विमनसस्तमूहुः परिचारकाः ॥१४॥
हिरण्यं च सुवर्णं च वासांसि विविधानि च । प्रकिरन्तो जना मार्गं नृपतेरग्रतो ययुः ॥१५॥
चन्दनागुरुनिर्यासान् सरलं पद्मकं तथा । देवदारूणि चाहृत्य चितां चक्रुस्तथापरे ॥१६॥
गन्धानुच्चावचांश्चान्यांस्तत्र गत्वाथ भूमिपम् । तत्र संवेशयामासुश्चितामध्ये तमृत्विजः ॥१७॥

To Bharata, who was lamenting as aforesaid, afflicted in mind as he was, the eminent sage Vasiṣṭth for his part spoke again in the following words:— (10) "Whatever funeral rites in relation to this monarch ought to be done should be coolly and unhesitatingly gone through, O mighty-armed prince !" (11) Bowing to the aforesaid command of Vasiṣṭha in the words "Let it be so !" Bharata urged everyone, *viz*, the priests engaged for sacrificial purposes, family priests and the Āchāryas to make haste. (12) The sacred fires maintained by the king, that had been taken out of the fire-sanctuary (on the latter's death) were being worshipped by the priests engaged for sacrificial purposes and superintending priests according to the scriptural ordinance. (13) Having placed the king, whose consciousness had departed (days ago), on a bier, the servants, who were feeling disconsolate, now bore him (on their shoulders to the cremation ground), their throats choked with tears. (14) Scattering flowers of silver and gold and pieces of cloth of every description on the road, people walked ahead of the king. (15) Fetching sandalwood, aloe, bdellium, the wood of Sarala (a species of pine) and Cerasus puddum and logs of deodar (the Himalayan cedar), others raised a funeral pile. (16) Nay, throwing other fragrant substances of various kinds into the funeral pile, the priests officiating at the obsequies laid the (deceased) emperor in the middle of the pyre at the cremation ground. (17)

तदा हुताशनं दत्त्वा जेपुस्तस्य तदृत्विजः । जगुश्च ते यथाशास्त्रं तत्र सामानि सामगाः ॥१८॥
शिबिकाभिश्च यानैश्च यथार्हं तस्य योषितः । नगरान्निर्ययुस्तत्र वृद्धैः परिवृतास्तथा ॥१९॥
प्रसव्यं चापि तं चक्रुर्ऋत्विजोऽग्निचितं नृपम् । स्त्रियश्च शोकसंतप्ताः कौसल्याप्रमुखास्तदा ॥२०॥
क्रौञ्चीनामिव नारीणां निनादस्तत्र शुश्रुवे । आर्तानां करुणं काले क्रोशन्तीनां सहस्रशः ॥२१॥
ततो रुदन्त्यो विवशा विलप्य च पुनः पुनः । यानेभ्यः सरयूतीरमवतेरुर्नृपाङ्गनाः ॥२२॥
कृत्वोदकं ते भरतेन सार्धं नृपाङ्गना मन्त्रिपुरोहिताश्च ।
पुरं प्रविश्याश्रुपरीतनेत्रा भूमौ दशाहं व्यनयन्त दुःखम् ॥२३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षट्सप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७६ ॥

Setting fire to the pyre (through the instrumentality of Bharata) the aforesaid priests engaged for the benefit of the emperor then recited sacred texts (relevant to the funeral rites); while those among the officiating priests who could recite the hymns of Sāmaveda chanted them according to the rules. (18) Attended by elderly guards the king's consorts likewise went out of the city (to the cremation ground) in palanquins and chariots according to their rank. (19) Then the priests officiating at the obsequies too as well as the ladies led by Kausalyā, who were sore stricken with grief, went clockwise round the said monarch, who had performed sacrifices (culminating in Aśwamedha). (20) There was heard on that occasion the noise of afflicted women wailing piteously in thousands like so many female cranes. (21) Having lamented again and again and crying helplessly, the king's consorts got down from their chariots at the bank of the Sarayu. (22) Having offered water (to the spirit of the deceased) along with Bharata and entering the city (once more) the king's consorts as well as the counsellors and family priests spent the following ten days (of their impurity caused by the emperor's death) in agony, reposing on the ground, their eyes filled with tears. (23)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-six in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXVII

Having performed with the help of Śatrughna all the obsequial rites relating to his deceased father on the twelfth day after his death, Bharata gifts to the Brahmans abundant gold and jewels as a part of the obsequies. Overwhelmed with grief on reaching the funeral pile in order to pick up the principal bones of the deceased on the thirteenth day, the prince drops to the ground. Rolling on the ground, Śatrughna for his part wails in profusion. Comforted by Vasiṣṭha and Sumantra, the two brothers urge the ministers to expedite the work of picking up the bones.

ततो दशाहेऽतिगते कृतशौचो नृपात्मजः । द्वादशेऽहनि सम्प्राप्ते श्राद्धकर्माण्यकारयत् ॥ १ ॥
ब्राह्मणेभ्यो धनं रत्नं ददावन्नं च पुष्कलम् । बास्तिकं बहु शुक्लं च गाश्चापि बहुशस्तदा ॥ २ ॥
दासीर्दासांश्च यानानि वेश्मानि सुमहान्ति च । ब्राह्मणेभ्यो ददौ पुत्रो राज्ञस्तस्यौर्ध्वदेहिकम् ॥ ३ ॥
ततः प्रभातसमये दिवसे च त्रयोदशे । विललाप महाबाहुर्भरतः शोकमूर्च्छितः ॥ ४ ॥
शब्दापिहितकण्ठश्च शोधनार्थमुपागतः । चितामूले पितुर्वाक्यमिदमाह सुदुःखितः ॥ ५ ॥
तात यस्मिन् निसृष्टोऽहं त्वया भ्रातरि राघवे । तस्मिन् वनं प्रव्रजिते शून्ये त्यक्तोऽस्म्यहं त्वया ॥ ६ ॥
यस्या गतिरनाथायाः पुत्रः प्रव्राजितो वनम् । तामम्बां तात कौसल्यां त्यक्त्वा त्वं क्व गतो नृप ॥ ७ ॥

Having attained purity (by performing the obsequial rites pertaining to the eleventh day of his father's death) when ten days had elapsed the prince (Bharata) next performed the obsequial rites pertaining to the twelfth day when that day duly arrived. (1) On that occasion he gifted to the Brahmans abundant gold, jewellery and foodgrains, a large herd of white goats and good many cows too. (2) The prince further gave away to the Brahmans, for the good of the king in the life beyond, female as well as male servants, chariots and very big houses. (3) Then on the thirteenth day at the time of daybreak the mighty-armed Bharata, overwhelmed as he was with grief, broke into a lament. (4)

Nay, having reached the foot of his father's funeral pile in order to collect the bones (for their immersion in the holy Sarayu river), the prince (who was sore distressed) addressed the following words (to his deceased father), his throat being choked through crying:— (5) "My celebrated (elder) brother, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), to whose care I was committed by you, having retired to the forest, O dear father, I have been (virtually) abandoned by you in a desolate place. (6) O dear father, O protector of men, where have you gone leaving Kausalyā, that mother of mine, whose son, the support of that forlorn lady, has been exiled to the forest?" (7)

दृष्ट्वा भस्मारुणं तच्च दग्धास्थि स्थानमण्डलम् । पितुः शरीरनिर्वाणं निष्टनन् विषसाद ह ॥८॥
स तु दृष्ट्वा रुदन् दीनः पपात धरणीतले । उत्थाप्यमानः शक्रस्य यन्त्रध्वज इवोच्छ्रितः ॥९॥
अभिपेतुस्ततः सर्वे तस्यामात्याः शुचिव्रतम् । अन्तकाले निपतितं ययातिमृषयो यथा ॥१०॥
शत्रुघ्नश्चापि भरतं दृष्ट्वा शोकपरिप्लुतम् । विसंज्ञो न्यपतद् भूमौ भूमिपालमनुस्मरन् ॥११॥
उन्मत्त इव निश्चित्तो विललाप सुदुःखितः । स्मृत्वा पितुर्गुणाङ्गानि तानि तानि तदा तदा ॥१२॥

Seeing that circular spot, the place where his father's remains had been burnt, (nay) which was (now) covered with ashes and red (because of its having been burnt with a blazing fire) and was (further) strewn with burnt bones, Bharata, they say, grew melancholy and began to cry. (8) Nay, afflicted to behold the spot, Bharata fell weeping on the ground as a tall banner would while being raised in honour of Indra with the help of a mechanical device. (9) Thereupon all his ministers rushed to Bharata (of holy resolve) as (royal) sages (Aṣṭaka and others) hastily approached King Yayāti fallen down (from heaven) when the stock of his merits (that sustained him in heaven) had been exhausted. (10) Nay, perceiving Bharata overwhelmed with grief, Śatrughna too, who had all along been thinking of the emperor (his father), dropped senseless on the ground. (11) Sore distressed to remember the various gestures of his father born of his loving qualities and made by him from time to time, Śatrughna lamented (as follows) like a madman, bewildered as he was:—(12)

मन्थराप्रभवस्तीव्रः कैकेयीग्राहसंकुलः । वरदानमयोऽक्षोभ्योऽमज्जयच्छोकसागरः ॥१३॥
सुकुमारं च बालं च सततं लालितं त्वया । क्व तात भरतं हित्वा विलपन्तं गतो भवान् ॥१४॥
ननु भोज्येषु पानेषु वस्त्रेष्वाभरणेषु च । प्रवारयति सर्वान् नस्तन्नः कोऽद्य करिष्यति ॥१५॥
अवदारणकाले तु पृथिवी नावदीर्यते । विहीना या त्वया राज्ञा धर्मज्ञेन महात्मना ॥१६॥
पितरि स्वर्गमापन्ने रामे चारण्यमाश्रिते । किं मे जीवितसामर्थ्ये प्रवेक्ष्यामि हुताशनम् ॥१७॥
हीनो भ्रात्रा च पित्रा च शून्यामिक्ष्वाकुपालिताम् । अयोध्यां न प्रवेक्ष्यामि प्रवेक्ष्यामि तपोवनम् ॥१८॥

"The violent and formidable sea of grief, released by Mantharā, which has appeared in the form of the boons (granted by my father in favour of Kaikeyī) and has been rendered fearful by alligators in the form of Kaikeyī's words, has overwhelmed us all. (13) Where have you gone, dear father, leaving Bharata,—who is (yet) a (mere) stripling, tender of body, and was constantly fondled by you,—weeping? (14) Indeed you made us all (the four brothers) have our best choice out of (a large variety of) eatables, drinks, articles of wearing apparel and ornaments (placed before us). (Since you have disappeared from our midst) who will discharge this function now? (15)

(How strange that) this earth, even though it has been deprived of you, its high-souled ruler, who knew what is right, is not riven even at a time when it should have been riven! (16) My father having reached heaven and Śrī Rāma having retired to the forest, what energy has been left in me to survive? I shall (accordingly) enter the fire. (17) Bereft of my brother and father too I would not return to Ayodhya,—which, though ruled (so long) by scions of Ikṣwāku, has (now) become desolate,—but shall withdraw to a forest suitable for austerities." (18)

तयोर्विलपितं श्रुत्वा व्यसनं चाप्यवेक्ष्य तत् । भृशमार्ततरा भूयः सर्व एवानुगामिनः ॥१९॥
ततो विषण्णौ श्रान्तौ च शत्रुघ्नभरतावुभौ । धरायां स्म व्यचेष्टेतां भग्नशृङ्गाविवर्षभौ ॥२०॥
ततः प्रकृतिमान् वैद्यः पितुरेषां पुरोहितः । वसिष्ठो भरतं वाक्यमुत्थाप्य तमुवाच ह ॥२१॥
त्रयोदशोऽयं दिवसः पितुर्वृत्तस्य ते विभो । सावशेषास्थिनिचये किमिह त्वं विलम्बसे ॥२२॥
त्रीणि द्वन्द्वानि भूतेषु प्रवृत्तान्यविशेषतः । तेषु चापरिहार्येषु नैवं भवितुमर्हसि ॥२३॥
सुमन्त्रश्चापि शत्रुघ्नमुत्थाप्याभिप्रसाद्य च । श्रावयामास तत्त्वज्ञः सर्वभूतभवाभवौ ॥२४॥
उत्थितौ तौ नरव्याघ्रौ प्रकाशेते यशस्विनौ । वर्षातपपरिग्लानौ पृथगिन्द्रध्वजाविव ॥२५॥
अश्रूणि परिमृद्नन्तौ रक्ताक्षौ दीनभाषिणौ । अमात्यास्त्वरयन्ति स्म तनयौ चापराः क्रियाः ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्तसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७७ ॥

Hearing the lament of the two brothers and perceiving their extreme agony as aforesaid, all their attendants felt sore distressed even more. (19) Dejected and distressed, Śatrughna and Bharata both now began to roll on the ground like a pair of bulls whose horns have been broken. (20) Raising Bharata up, the omniscient Vasiṣṭha, the family priest of their father as well as of them all, endowed as he was with an amiable disposition, spoke to him as follows, so the tradition goes:—(21) "Today is the thirteenth day since your father was cremated, my lord! Why (then) do you lag behind now in winding up the remaining part of the ceremony of collecting the bones (*viz*, cleaning and washing the ground on which the king's body had been cremated and consigning the ashes to the river)? (22) Three pairs of opposites (life and death, joy and sorrow, gain and loss) prevail alike in (all) living beings. And they being unavoidable, you ought not to behave like this." (23) Raising up and pacifying Śatrughna, Sumantra too, a knower of the Truth, told him how birth and death were inevitable for all created beings. (24) The two illustrious princes, who were (veritable) tigers among men and had (now) got up, shone like two banners severally raised in honour of Indra (the god of rain) and soiled through rain and the sun. (25) The ministers (now) urged the two princes,—who were wiping their tears and speaking in a piteous tone, their eyes reddened (through excessive grief),—to expedite the other rites (pertaining to the thirteenth day, *viz*, removing the ashes and throwing them into the river and so on). (26)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-seven in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टसप्ततितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXVIII

While Bharata is contemplating to undertake a journey to meet Śrī Rāma, Śatrughna blames Lakṣmaṇa for failing to restrain his father and forcibly prevent Śrī Rāma's exile. In the meantime Bharata catches sight of Mantharā standing at the door decked with ornaments and points to her as the root of all mischief. Śatrughna thereupon pounces upon the maidservant standing in the midst of her companions and, seizing her by her locks, drags her on the floor and reproaches Kaikeyī too. On the latter pleading for mercy on Mantharā's behalf, Bharata intervenes and Śatrughna lets her go.

अथ यात्रां समीहन्तं शत्रुघ्नो लक्ष्मणानुजः । भरतं शोकसंतप्तमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
गतिर्यः सर्वभूतानां दुःखे किं पुनरात्मनः । स रामः सत्त्वसम्पन्नः स्त्रिया प्रव्राजितो वनम् ॥ २ ॥
बलवान् वीर्यसम्पन्नो लक्ष्मणो नाम योऽप्यसौ । किं न मोचयते रामं कृत्वाऽपि पितृनिग्रहम् ॥ ३ ॥
पूर्वमेव तु विग्राह्यः समवेक्ष्य नयानयौ । उत्पथं यः समारूढो नार्या राजा वशं गतः ॥ ४ ॥
इति सम्भाषमाणे तु शत्रुघ्ने लक्ष्मणानुजे । प्राग्द्वारेऽभूत् तदा कुब्जा सर्वाभरणभूषिता ॥ ५ ॥
लिप्ता चन्दनसारेण राजवस्त्राणि बिभ्रती । विविधं विविधैस्तैस्तैर्भूषणैश्च विभूषिता ॥ ६ ॥
मेखलादामभिश्चित्रैरन्यैश्च वरभूषणैः । बभासे बहुभिर्बद्धा रज्जुभिरिव वानरी ॥ ७ ॥

To Bharata, who was sore stricken with grief and was contemplating to undertake a journey (to meet Śrī Rāma), Śatrughna, the younger brother of Lakṣmaṇa, spoke as follows :—(1) "(How strange that) the same Śrī Rāma who is possessed of (extraordinary) might and is the support of all created beings in distress, much more of himself and his own, was exiled into the forest by a woman ! (2) What a pity that even Lakṣmaṇa, who is full of might and rich in prowess, did not deliver Śrī Rāma (from distress), going the length even (if necessary) of restraining his father ! (3) In fact, fully considering what is just and what is unjust, the king, who had adopted a wrong course, having fallen into the clutches of a woman, ought to have been restrained even before (matters came to a head)." (4) Even while Śatrughna, the younger brother of Lakṣmaṇa, was speaking as aforesaid, Mantharā (the hunch-backed maidservant of Kaikeyī) appeared at that (very) moment decked with all (sorts of) ornaments at the eastern door. (5) Smeared (all over) with excellent sandal-paste and wearing royal constumes she was adorned in various ways with ornaments of every description pertaining to all limbs. (6) Adorned with lovely girdles and other excellent ornaments (worn round the waist), she looked like a female monkey bound with a number of strings. (7)

तां समीक्ष्य तदा द्वाःस्थो भृशं पापस्य कारिणीम् । गृहीत्वाकरुणं कुब्जां शत्रुघ्नाय न्यवेदयत् ॥ ८ ॥
यस्याः कृते वने रामो न्यस्तदेहश्च वः पिता । सेयं पापा नृशंसा च तस्याः कुरु यथामति ॥ ९ ॥
शत्रुघ्नश्च तदाज्ञाय वचनं भृशदुःखितः । अन्तःपुरचरान् सर्वानित्युवाच धृतव्रतः ॥ १० ॥

तीव्रमुत्पादितं दुःखं भ्रातॄणां मे तथा पितुः । यथा सेयं नृशंसस्य कर्मणः फलमश्नुताम् ॥११॥
एवमुक्त्वा च तेनाशु सखीजनसमावृता । गृहीता बलवत् कुब्जा सा तद् गृहमनादयत् ॥१२॥
ततः सुभृशसंतप्तस्तस्याः सर्वः सखीजनः । क्रुद्धमाज्ञाय शत्रुघ्नं व्यपलायत सर्वशः ॥१३॥
अमन्त्रयत कृत्स्नश्च तस्याः सर्वः सखीजनः । यथायं समुपक्रान्तो निःशेषं नः करिष्यति ॥१४॥
सानुक्रोशां वदान्यां च धर्मज्ञां च यशस्विनीम् । कौसल्यां शरणं यामः सा हि नोऽस्ति ध्रुवा गतिः ॥१५॥

Gazing on that humpback, who was responsible for the sinful deed (in the form of banishment of Śrī Rāma and others, which had proved a terrible curse for the entire population of Ayodhya) and seizing her most heartlessly, the porter (on duty) delivered her to Śatrughna (with the following words):—(8) "Here is that cruel wretch because of whom Śrī Rāma is living in the forest and your father has cast off his body! Deal with her as you please." (9) Pondering the aforesaid submission (of the porter) and having determined his course of action, Śatrughna, who was feeling sore distressed, spoke to all the inmates of the gynaeceum as follows:—(10) "Let this wench reap the fruit of her cruel deed as acute agony has been caused by her to my brothers as well as to my father." (11) With these words the humpback, who was surrounded by her female companions, was violently seized by him at once; (and) she (in her turn) made that chamber (where he stood) resound (with her shrieks). (12) Extremely agonized to perceive Śatrughna enraged, all her female companions forthwith ran away helter-skelter in all directions. (13) All her female companions as well as the entire menial staff said to one another, "From the way in which he has started dealing with us it can easily be concluded that he will put an end to us (all). (14) We shall fly for protection to Kausalyā, who is merciful, polite of speech and glorious and knows what is right; for she is our unfailing asylum." (15)

स च रोषेण संवीतः शत्रुघ्नः शत्रुशासनः । विचकर्ष तदा कुब्जां क्रोशन्तीं पृथिवीतले ॥१६॥
तस्यां ह्याकृष्यमाणायां मन्थरायां ततस्ततः । चित्रं बहुविधं भाण्डं पृथिव्यां तद् व्यशीर्यत ॥१७॥
तेन भाण्डेन विस्तीर्णं श्रीमद् राजनिवेशनम् । अशोभत तदा भूयः शारदं गगनं यथा ॥१८॥
स बली बलवत्क्रोधाद् गृहीत्वा पुरुषर्षभः । कैकेयीमभिनिर्भर्त्स्य बभाषे परुषं वचः ॥१९॥
तैर्वाक्यैः परुषैर्दुःखैः कैकेयी भृशदुःखिता । शत्रुघ्नभयसंत्रस्ता पुत्रं शरणमागता ॥२०॥

Nay, overwhelmed with anger, the said Śatrughna, the chastiser of his enemies, then violently dragged the crying humpback along the floor. (16) While the notorious Mantharā was being dragged to and fro on the ground, her excellent ornaments of various kinds, mentioned above, were actually dashed to pieces. (17) Strewn with those (broken) ornaments, the splendid royal palace shone all the more at that moment like the (clear) actual sky (spangled with stars). (18) Continuing to hold Mantharā in violent rage and sharply rebuking Kaikeyī (who had come to protect her maidservant), that mighty prince, a (veritable) jewel among men, spoke harsh words (to her). (19) Greatly pained by those harsh and unpleasant words and overwhelmed with fear of Śatrughna, Kaikeyī fled for protection to her (own) son. (20)

तं प्रेक्ष्य भरतः क्रुद्धं शत्रुघ्नमिदमब्रवीत् । अवध्याः सर्वभूतानां प्रमदाः क्षम्यतामिति ॥२१॥
हन्यामहमिमां पापां कैकेयीं दुष्टचारिणीम् । यदि मां धार्मिको रामो नासूयेन्मातृघातकम् ॥२२॥

इमामपि हतां कुब्जां यदि जानाति राघवः । त्वां च मां चैव धर्मात्मा नाभिभाषिष्यते ध्रुवम् ॥२३॥
भरतस्य वचः श्रुत्वा शत्रुघ्नो लक्ष्मणानुजः । न्यवर्तत ततो दोषात् तां मुमोच च मूर्च्छिताम् ॥२४॥
सा पादमूले कैकेय्या मन्थरा निपपात ह । निःश्वसन्ती सुदुःखार्ता कृपणं विललाप ह ॥२५॥
शत्रुघ्नविक्षेपविमूढसंज्ञां समीक्ष्य कुब्जां भरतस्य माता ।
शनैः समाश्वासयदार्तरूपां क्रौञ्चीं विलग्नामिव वीक्षमाणाम् ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टसप्ततितमः सर्गः ॥ ७८ ॥

Perceiving Śatrughna enraged, Bharata spoke to him as follows:—"Women are undeserving of death at the hands of all men. Let her be forgiven as such. (21) I (myself) would have slain this sinful Kaikeyī of vicious conduct had it not been for the fact that the pious Śrī Rāma is sure to get angry with me for my having killed my (own) mother. (22) (Nay) Śrī Rāma, whose mind is given to piety, will surely never speak not only with you but also with me if he (ultimately) comes to know even of this humpback having been killed (by us)." (23) Hearing the admonition of Bharata, Śatrughna, the younger brother of Lakṣmaṇa, desisted from the aforesaid crime and left her (almost) unconscious. (24) The notorious Mantharā, it is said, fell at the soles of Kaikeyī's feet. (Nay) drawing a deep audible breath expressive of sadness, sore stricken as she was with sorrow, she piteously wailed: so the tradition goes. (25) Perceiving the humpback stunned because of her having been dragged to and fro by Śatrughna, and wearing a wretched look and looking on her boss like a female crane released from captivity, Bharata's mother slowly calmed her. (26)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-eight in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकोनाशीतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXIX

On the fourteenth day the foremost of counsellors entreat Bharata to accept the throne. Turning down their entreaty, Bharata, who is keen to bring Śrī Rāma back to Ayodhya, urges them to detail expert engineers to construct a road, bridges and causeways etc. to facilitate his journey to the place of Śrī Rāma's abode.

ततः प्रभातसमये दिवसेऽथ चतुर्दशे । समेत्य राजकर्तारो भरतं वाक्यमब्रुवन् ॥ १ ॥
गतो दशरथः स्वर्गं यो नो गुरुतरो गुरुः । रामं प्रव्राज्य वै ज्येष्ठं लक्ष्मणं च महाबलम् ॥ २ ॥
त्वमद्य भव नो राजा राजपुत्र महायशः । संगत्या नापराध्नोति राज्यमेतदनायकम् ॥ ३ ॥
आभिषेचनिकं सर्वमिदमादाय राघव । प्रतीक्षते त्वां स्वजनः श्रेणयश्च नृपात्मज ॥ ४ ॥
राज्यं गृहाण भरत पितृपैतामहं ध्रुवम् । अभिषेचय चात्मानं पाहि चास्मान् नरर्षभ ॥ ५ ॥
आभिषेचनिकं भाण्डं कृत्वा सर्वं प्रदक्षिणम् । भरतस्तं जनं सर्वं प्रत्युवाच धृतव्रतः ॥ ६ ॥

Coming together on the fourteenth day at daybreak, the king's counsellors forthwith spoke to Bharata as follows:—(1) "Alas, having sent into exile his eldest son (Śrī Rāma) as well as Lakṣmaṇa, who is possessed of extraordinary might, Daśaratha, who was our most venerable sovereign, has ascended to heaven. (2) This kingdom being without a ruler, be you our ruler now, O highly illustrious prince! There being justification (for your assuming the reins of government because your elder brother has been exiled under the command of your father and you have been nominated by him as his successor) you are not to blame (for superseding the claims of your brother). (3) Taking all these requisites for your consecration, O scion of Raghu, your own people (the counsellors and ministers) as well as the citizens are awaiting your pleasure, O prince! (4) Accept the throne (of Ayodhya), which has surely been inherited by you from your father and grandfather, O Bharata, and have yourself consecrated and (thereby) protect us, O jewel among men!" (5) Going clockwise (as a mark of respect) round all the requisites for consecration, Bharata, who had taken the vow of propitiating Śrī Rāma, replied to all those counsellors (as follows):—(6)

ज्येष्ठस्य राजता नित्यमुचिता हि कुलस्य नः । नैवं भवन्तो मां वक्तुमर्हन्ति कुशला जनाः ॥ ७ ॥
रामः पूर्वो हि नो भ्राता भविष्यति महीपतिः । अहं त्वरण्ये वत्स्यामि वर्षाणि नव पञ्च च ॥ ८ ॥
युज्यतां महती सेना चतुरङ्गमहाबला । आनयिष्याम्यहं ज्येष्ठं भ्रातरं राघवं वनात् ॥ ९ ॥
आभिषेचनिकं चैव सर्वमेतदुपस्कृतम् । पुरस्कृत्य गमिष्यामि रामहेतोर्वनं प्रति ॥१०॥
तत्रैव तं नरव्याघ्रमभिषिच्य पुरस्कृतम् । आनयिष्यामि वै रामं हव्यवाहमिवाध्वरात् ॥११॥
न सकामां करिष्यामि स्वामिमां मातृगन्धिनीम् । वने वत्स्याम्यहं दुर्गे रामो राजा भविष्यति ॥१२॥
क्रियतां शिल्पिभिः पन्थाः समानि विषमाणि च । रक्षिणश्चानुसंयान्तु पथि दुर्गविचारकाः ॥१३॥

"Since (the practice of) conferring the kingship on the eldest brother has ever been regarded as commendable in our race, you, who are (all) clever people, ought not to make such a request to me. (7) Śrī Rāma will be the ruler of the earth, since he is our eldest brother. I for my part shall reside in the forest for nine years and five (on his behalf). (8) Let a large and exceptionally powerful army consisting of (all) the four limbs be got ready (to accompany me to the forest). I shall bring back (in state) my elder brother, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) from the forest. (9) Placing in the van all these requisites got together for the consecration ceremony, I shall proceed in the direction of the forest in order to meet Śrī Rāma. (10) Having consecrated that tiger among men in the forest itself I shall surely bring Śrī Rāma (back to Ayodhya) with honour (even) as one would bring a sacred fire from a (big) fire-sanctuary (to one's own house). (11) I shall not allow this so-called mother of mine to realize her ambition (of seeing her son crowned king). I shall (on the contrary) reside in a forest difficult to cross, while Śrī Rāma will be crowned king. (12) Let a passage be carved by masons (where there is none), let uneven roads be levelled, and let guards knowing the difficult and narrow passages duly follow us." (13)

एवं सम्भाषमाणं तं रामहेतोर्नृपात्मजम् । प्रत्युवाच जनः सर्वः श्रीमद् वाक्यमनुत्तमम् ॥१४॥
एवं ते भाषमाणस्य पद्मा श्रीरुपतिष्ठताम् । यस्त्वं ज्येष्ठे नृपसुते पृथिवीं दातुमिच्छसि ॥१५॥

अनुत्तमं तद्वचनं नृपात्मजः प्रभाषितं संश्रवणे निशम्य च ।
प्रहर्षजास्तं प्रति बाष्पबिन्दवो निपेतुरार्याननेत्रसम्भवाः ॥१६॥
ऊचुस्ते वचनमिदं निशम्य हृष्टाः सामात्याः सपरिषदो वियातशोकाः ।
पन्थानं नरवर भक्तिमाञ्जनश्च व्यादिष्टस्तव वचनाच्च शिल्पिवर्गः ॥१७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकोनशीतितमः सर्गः ॥ ७९ ॥

To the above mentioned prince (Bharata), who was talking as aforesaid in the interest of Śrī Rāma, all the counsellors made the following agreeable and excellent reply:—(14) "Let the Goddess of Fortune, known by the name of Padmā (so called because She has Her abode in a bed of lotuses), (ever) be with you, who are speaking in this strain and seek to restore (the sovereignty of) the globe to the eldest prince (Śrī Rāma)!" (15) The prince (Bharata) rejoiced to hear the excellent benediction poured by the counsellors into his ears. Nay, tear-drops born of excessive delight and gratitude towards them flowed from the eyes of Bharata, whose countenance (too) was lit up with joy. (16) Rejoiced to hear the aforesaid proposal (of Bharata to proceed to the forest to bring back Śrī Rāma to Ayodhya after consecrating him as king in the forest itself) the counsellors including the ministers as well as those invited to take part in the assembly found their grief altogether vanished and said, "In obedience to your command, O jewel among men, engineers as well as guards, who are full of devotion (to you as well as to Śrī Rāma), have been told off to prepare the way." (17)

Thus ends Canto Seventy-nine in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अशीतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXX

The engineers detailed by Bharata's ministers construct a broad passage from Ayodhya to the bank of the Ganga and render it easy to tread by erecting pavilions and digging wells here and there on the roadside.

अथ भूमिप्रदेशज्ञाः सूत्रकर्मविशारदाः । स्वकर्माभिरताः शूराः खनका यन्त्रकास्तथा ॥ १ ॥
कर्मान्तिकाः स्थपतयः पुरुषा यन्त्रकोविदाः । तथा वर्धकयश्चैव मार्गिणो वृक्षतक्षकाः ॥ २ ॥
सूपकाराः सुधाकारा वंशचर्मकृतस्तथा । समर्था ये च द्रष्टारः पुरतश्च प्रतस्थिरे ॥ ३ ॥
स तु हर्षात् तमुद्देशं जनौघो विपुलः प्रयान् । अशोभत महावेगः सागरस्येव पर्वणि ॥ ४ ॥
ते स्ववारं समास्थाय वर्त्मकर्मणि कोविदाः । करणैर्विविधोपेतैः पुरस्तात् सम्प्रतस्थिरे ॥ ५ ॥
लता वल्लीश्च गुल्मांश्च स्थाणूनश्मन एव च । जनास्ते चक्रिरे मार्गं छिन्दन्तो विविधान् द्रुमान् ॥ ६ ॥

Now men expert in divining the presence of subterranean water in a given plot of land, those adept in designing buildings, pavilions etc., gallant men vigilant in their duty (of guarding the roadways), workmen expert in sinking wells and digging tunnels etc., mechanics contriving devices for crossing streams etc. or obstructing the flow of water, paid labourers, architects, men expert in making catapults etc., even so carpenters, those entrusted with the duty of clearing or guarding the way, hewers of trees and cooks, men expert in plastering and white-washing etc., those preparing mats and winnowing fans etc. from bamboos and making articles of leather (such as saddles), and capable guides set forth in advance. (1—3) Marching with joy to the region where Śrī Rāma was sojourning, that huge multitude of men really shone like a great upsurge of the ocean on a full moon. (4) Seeking the company of their own confreres, men skilled in constructing roads etc. marched ahead with implements of various kinds. (5) Removing boughs of trees as well as creepers and shrubs, stumps and rocks too and cutting down trees of every description (that obstructed the way), those men hewed out a path. (6)

अवृक्षेषु च देशेषु केचिद् वृक्षानरोपयन् । केचित् कुठारैष्टङ्कैश्च दात्रैश्छिन्दन् क्वचित् क्वचित् ॥ ७ ॥
अपरे वीरणस्तम्बान् बलिनो बलवत्तराः । विधमन्ति स्म दुर्गाणि स्थलानि च ततस्ततः ॥ ८ ॥
अपरेऽपूरयन् कूपान् पांसुभिः श्वभ्रमायतम् । निम्नभागांस्तथैवाशु समांश्चक्रुः समन्ततः ॥ ९ ॥
बबन्धुर्बन्धनीयांश्च क्षोद्यान् संचुक्षुदुस्तथा । बिभिदुर्भेदनीयांश्च तांस्तान् देशान् नरास्तदा ॥१०॥
अचिरेण तु कालेन परिवाहान् बहूदकान् । चक्रुर्बहुविधाकारान् सागरप्रतिमान् बहून् ॥११॥
निर्जलेषु च देशेषु खानयामासुरुत्तमान् । उदपानान् बहुविधान् वेदिकापरिमण्डितान् ॥१२॥
ससुधाकुट्टिमतलः प्रपुष्पितमहीरुहः । मत्तोद्घुष्टद्विजगणः पताकाभिरलंकृतः ॥१३॥
चन्दनोदकसंसिक्तो नानाकुसुमभूषितः । बह्वशोभत सेनायाः पन्थाः सुरपथोपमः ॥१४॥

Nay, some men raised trees in treeless areas (for providing shade); while others hewed the existing ones here and there by means of axes, hatchets and sickles. (7) (Still) others, who were stronger than the rest, tore by the roots (with their own hands) tufts of Vīraṇa grass (a fragrant grass), that had got firmly rooted, and levelled uneven stretches of land at different places. (8) Others filled (waterless) wells (covered with grass etc., that fell on the way) as well as extensive pits with earth. Similarly they levelled low-lying lands all round in no time. (9) On that occasion the workmen bridged the streams that could be bridged, and likewise crushed the pebbles etc. that could be crushed and smashed the impediments that (obstructed the passage of water and) were worth smashing. (10) (By constructing dams) they actually turned in a short time rivulets into many ponds of various sizes and shapes, containing plentiful water and resembling seas. (11) Nay, in waterless tracts they caused to be sunk excellent wells of every description embellished with platforms (for people to sit on). (12) The highway carved out for the army (to pass along) was paved with concrete mixed with lime and lined with trees laden with blossoms. Flocks of birds excited with sexual passion and giving out shrill cries were seen on those trees and the road was (also) decorated with buntings. The road, which was sprinkled with water mixed with sandal paste, and adorned with flowers of various kinds, looked most charming like a pathway of gods. (13-14)

आज्ञाप्याथ यथाशक्ति युक्तास्तेऽधिकृता नराः । रमणीयेषु देशेषु बहुस्वादुफलेषु च ॥१५॥
यो निवेशस्त्वभिप्रेतो भरतस्य महात्मनः । भूयस्तं शोभयामासुर्भूषाभिर्भूषणोपमम् ॥१६॥
नक्षत्रेषु प्रशस्तेषु मुहूर्तेषु च तद्विदः । निवेशान् स्थापयामासुर्भरतस्य महात्मनः ॥१७॥

बहुपांसुचयाश्चापि परिखाः परिवारिताः । तत्रेन्द्रनीळप्रतिमाः प्रतोळीवरशोभिताः ॥१८॥
प्रासादमालासंयुक्ताः सौधप्राकारसंवृताः । पताकाशोभिताः सर्वे सुनिर्मितमहापथाः ॥१९॥
विसर्पद्भिरिवाकाशे विटङ्काग्रविमानकैः । समुच्छ्रितैर्निवेशास्ते बभुः शक्रपुरोपमाः ॥२०॥
जाह्नवीं तु समासाद्य विविधद्रुमकाननाम् । शीतलामलपानीयां महामीनसमाकुलाम् ॥२१॥
सचन्द्रतारागणमण्डितं यथा नभः क्षपायाममलं विराजते ।
नरेन्द्रमार्गः स तदा व्यराजत क्रमेण रम्यः शुभशिल्पिनिर्मितः ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽशीतितमः सर्गः ॥ ८० ॥

Nay, having given orders (to the workers to fix tents etc.) as enjoined (by Bharata), the aforesaid officers (entrusted with the work of fixing tents etc.), who were (all) alert, got tents pitched forthwith in delightful areas abounding in luscious fruits. They further adorned with decorations the tent which was liked by the high-souled Bharata and in itself resembled an ornament. (15-16) The knowers of (the science of) architecture consecrated the camps erected for the high-souled Bharata at auspicious hours on days when the stars were propitious. (17) Many heaps of earth were raised and moats too excavated round these camps. Enclosed by those moats stood tents containing images of sapphire and adorned with excellent lanes. (18) Accompanied by rows of temples, the camps were bounded by enclosures whitewashed with lime. They were all decorated with buntings and divided by well-designed roads. (19) Standing side by side with seven-storeyed mansions, the tops of which were provided with dove-cots and which flew about as it were in the air, the said camps shone like (so many) capitals of Indra. (20) Extending up to the bank of the (holy) Ganga (foster-daughter of King Jahnu),—which was hemmed in with forests consisting of trees of every description, was full of cool and limpid waters and infested with large fishes,—that delightful road, constructed in gradual stages by capable engineers, looked very charming at that time (even) as a cloudless sky adorned with a host of stars accompanied by the moon during the night. (21-22)

Thus ends Canto Eighty in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकाशीतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXXI

The king's bards, panegyrists and minstrels having commenced eulogizing Bharata in the customary way in the midst of festal music at sunrise the following morning, Bharata stops it, disclaiming sovereignty, and complains to Śatrughna of the ill turn done to the world by his own mother. In the meantime Sage Vasiṣṭha enters the royal court and sends messengers to Bharata urging him to be present in the court; and in response to his call Bharata, accompanied by Śatrughna and others, enters the assembly.

ततो नान्दीमुखीं रात्रिं भरतं सूतमागधाः । तुष्टुवुः सविशेषज्ञाः स्तवैर्मङ्गलसंस्तवैः ॥ १ ॥

सुवर्णकोणाभिहतः प्राणदद् यामदुन्दुभिः । दध्मुः शङ्खांश्च शतशो वाद्यांश्चोच्चावचस्वरान् ॥ २ ॥
स तूर्यघोषः सुमहान् दिवमापूरयन्निव । भरतं शोकसंतप्तं भूयः शोकैररन्धयत् ॥ ३ ॥
ततः प्रबुद्धो भरतस्तं घोषं संनिवर्त्य च । नाहं राजेति चोक्त्वा तं शत्रुघ्नमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ ४ ॥
पश्य शत्रुघ्न कैकेय्या लोकस्यापकृतं महत् । विसृज्य मयि दुःखानि राजा दशरथो गतः ॥ ५ ॥
तस्यैषा धर्मराजस्य धर्ममूला महात्मनः । परिभ्रमति राजश्रीर्नौरिवाकर्णिका जले ॥ ६ ॥
यो हि नः सुमहान् नाथः सोऽपि प्रव्राजितो वने । अनया धर्ममुत्सृज्य मात्रा मे राघवः स्वयम् ॥ ७ ॥
इत्येवं भरतं वीक्ष्य विलपन्तमचेतनम् । कृपणा रुरुदुः सर्वाः सुस्वरं योषितस्तदा ॥ ८ ॥

Seeing the night preceding the Nāndīmukha* and other festal ceremonies (proposed to be performed by Vasiṣṭha preliminary to Bharata's coronation the following morning) approaching its end, the bards and panegyrists well-versed in eulogizing kings and princes on special occasions extolled Bharata by means of benedictory encomia. (1) Struck with a gold stick, the drum which was beaten (at regular hours) to notify the end of every quarter of the day sounded loudly. Nay, the servants blew conches and sounded hundreds of musical instruments of various pitches. (2) Filling the space on all sides as it were, that very loud sound of musical instruments further oppressed with grief Bharata, who was (already) tormented with grief. (3) Causing that music to be completely stopped the moment he was roused as a result of it, and saying that he was not the ruler, spoke to the celebrated Śatrughna as follows:—(4) "See, O Śatrughna, the great wrong that has been done to the world by Kaikeyī. (And) leaving (a legacy of) sufferings to my share, King Daśaratha (too) has departed (from this world). (5) This royal fortune, rooted in righteousness, of that high-souled monarch, who was an embodiment of piety, is drifting like a boat without a pilot in water. (6) Even the celebrated Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who was undoubtedly our very great protector and lord, has been sent in exile to the forest by this very mother of mine casting righteousness to the winds." (7) Perceiving Bharata lamenting as aforesaid in a distracted state of mind at that (critical) moment, all the women (present in the gynaeceum) piteously wailed at the top of their voice. (8)

तथा तस्मिन् विलपति वसिष्ठो राजधर्मवित् । सभामिक्ष्वाकुनाथस्य प्रविवेश महायशाः ॥ ९ ॥
शातकुम्भमयीं रम्यां मणिरत्नसमाकुलाम् । सुधर्मामिव धर्मात्मा सगणः प्रत्यपद्यत ॥१०॥
स काञ्चनमयं पीठं स्वस्त्यास्तरणसंवृतम् । अध्यास्त सर्ववेदज्ञो दूताननुशशास च ॥११॥
ब्राह्मणान् क्षत्रियान् योधानमात्यान् गणवल्लभान् । क्षिप्रमानयताव्यग्राः कृत्यमात्ययिकं हि नः ॥१२॥
सराजपुत्रं शत्रुघ्नं भरतं च यशस्विनम् । युधाजितं सुमन्त्रं च ये च तत्र हिता जनाः ॥१३॥
ततो हलहलाशब्दो महान् समुदपद्यत । रथैरश्वैर्गजैश्चापि जनानामुपगच्छताम् ॥१४॥
ततो भरतमायान्तं शतक्रतुमिवामराः । प्रत्यनन्दन् प्रकृतयो यथा दशरथं तथा ॥१५॥

ह्रद इव तिमिनागसंवृतः स्तिमितजलो मणिशङ्खशर्करः ।
दशरथसुतशोभिता सभा सदशरथेव बभूव सा पुरा ॥१६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकाशीतितमः सर्गः ॥ ८१ ॥

---

* The name of a Śrāddha offered at the beginning of a festive occasion to one's departed ancestors to secure their blessings.

While Bharata was wailing as mentioned above, the highly illustrious Sage Vasiṣṭha, who was well-versed in the code of conduct prescribed for kings, entered the court of King Daśaratha (the ruler of the Ikṣwākus). (9) Accompanied by his host of pupils, the sage, whose mind was given to piety, got into the delightful council-chamber, which was mostly built of gold and studded all over with pearls and precious stones (of various kinds) and looked like Sudharmā (the court of Indra, the lord of paradise). (10) The sage, who had mastered all the Vedas, occupied a seat of gold covered by a cloth bearing the design of swastika (denoting good luck), and commanded the messengers (as follows): so the tradition goes:—(11) "Since there is some urgent business to be disposed of by us, please bring (hither) promptly and quietly Brahmans, Kṣatriyas, warriors, ministers, troop commanders, Śatrughna and the illustrious Bharata with (other) princes, Yudhājit (one of the chief counsellors, nicknamed Vijaya) and Sumantra as well as (all other) people who are friendly to Bharata." (12-13) A great noise then burst forth from men approaching in chariots as well as on horseback and on elephants. (14) The ministers and counsellors as well as the people cheered Bharata coming (to the council-chamber) as they used to greet Daśaratha and (even) as gods would greet Indra (who is believed to have performed a hundred Aśwamedha sacrifices as a condition precedent for his assuming the position of Indra). (15) Resembling a pool* (in the sea), having still waters and infested with Timis (a kind of fish credited with a length and breadth of many leagues) and sea-elephants and full of gems, conches and dust of gold, the aforesaid court graced with (the august presence of) Bharata (son of Daśaratha) looked as it did when adorned with (the presence of) Daśaratha in the past. (16)

Thus ends Canto Eighty-one in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्व्यशीतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXXII

Sage Vasiṣṭha urges Bharata to accept the kingdom bequeathed to him by his father and elder brother. Bharata, however, scornfully declines the offer and takes a solemn pledge to depart for the forest and try his level best to bring his elder brother back to Ayodhya. At his instance Sumantra gets a chariot ready to take him to the forest and brings the chariot to his presence.

तामार्यगणसम्पूर्णां भरतः प्रग्रहां सभाम् । ददर्श बुद्धिसम्पन्नः पूर्णचन्द्रां निशामिव ॥ १ ॥

---

* In this simile the figures of Timis and sea-elephants painted on the floor of the council-chamber are compared to aquatic creatures of the same name figuring in the sea, the sheen of the glittering pavement of the chamber to the still waters of the sea, the gems with which the floor is inlaid with those embedded in the depths of a sea, the figures of conches figuring in the pavement to conch-shells found in sea-beds and the gold coating on the floor to the dust of gold found in gold mines in the bowels of a sea.

आसनानि यथान्यायमार्याणां विशतां तदा । वस्त्राङ्गरागप्रभया द्योतिता सा सभोत्तमा ॥ २ ॥
सा विद्वज्जनसम्पूर्णा सभा सुरुचिरा तथा । अदृश्यत घनापाये पूर्णचन्द्रेव शर्वरी ॥ ३ ॥
राज्ञस्तु प्रकृतीः सर्वाः स सम्प्रेक्ष्य च धर्मवित् । इदं पुरोहितो वाक्यं भरतं मृदु चाब्रवीत् ॥ ४ ॥
तात राजा दशरथः स्वर्गतो धर्ममाचरन् । धनधान्यवतीं स्फीतां प्रदाय पृथिवीं तव ॥ ५ ॥
रामस्तथा सत्यवृत्तिः सतां धर्ममनुस्मरन् । नाजहात् पितुरादेशं शशी ज्योत्स्नामिवोदितः ॥ ६ ॥
पित्रा भ्रात्रा च ते दत्तं राज्यं निहतकण्टकम् । तद् भुङ्क्ष्व मुदितामात्यः क्षिप्रमेवाभिषेचय ॥ ७ ॥
उदीच्याश्च प्रतीच्याश्च दाक्षिणात्याश्च केवलाः । कोट्यापरान्ताः सामुद्रा रत्नान्युपहरन्तु ते ॥ ८ ॥

Bharata, who was rich in intelligence, beheld the aforesaid assembly, full of hosts of worthy men and attended by great souls (like Vasiṣṭha) and (as such) resembling a night illumined by a full moon and adorned with (other) major planets. (1) That eminent gathering was lit up with the splendour of the raiment worn and the pigment painted on the person of the worthies occupying their seats according to their deserts on that occasion. (2) That most brilliant conclave looked as charming as a night illumined by a full moon during the autumn (marked by the absence of clouds). (3) Looking intently on and reading the mind of all the king's ministers and the people (present there), the said Vasiṣṭha (the family priest of the rulers of Ayodhya), for his part, who knows what is right, spoke as follows and gently (too) to Bharata :—(4) "King Daśaratha, my child, has ascended to heaven practising virtue (in the form of redeeming his plighted word) and bequeathing (the sovereignty of) the prosperous earth, full of gold and food-grains, to you. (5) Bearing in mind the duty of virtuous souls (*viz*, obeying the command of their parents), Śrī Rāma, who is truthful of conduct like his father, did not disregard the command of his father any more than the risen moon quits the moonlight. (6) Sovereignty with (all) its thorns completely removed has been conferred on you by your father and (elder) brother. Assisted by ministers who are (all) pleased (with you), enjoy it and quickly get yourself consecrated (for the coronation). (7) Let the rulers of the north and the west as well as of the south and the east and the kings of the western borders near the Sahya mountains, who are without a throne (and therefore not enjoying sovereign rights), as well as seafaring traders bring countless jewels as offerings to you." (8)

तच्छ्रुत्वा भरतो वाक्यं शोकेनाभिपरिप्लुतः । जगाम मनसा रामं धर्मज्ञो धर्मकाङ्क्षया ॥ ९ ॥
सबाष्पकलया वाचा कलहंसस्वरो युवा । विललाप सभामध्ये जगर्हे च पुरोहितम् ॥१०॥
चरितब्रह्मचर्यस्य विद्यास्नातस्य धीमतः । धर्मे प्रयतमानस्य को राज्यं मद्विधो हरेत् ॥११॥
कथं दशरथाज्जातो भवेद् राज्यापहारकः । राज्यं चाहं च रामस्य धर्मं वक्तुमिहार्हसि ॥१२॥
ज्येष्ठः श्रेष्ठश्च धर्मात्मा दिलीपनहुषोपमः । लब्धुमर्हति काकुत्स्थो राज्यं दशरथो यथा ॥१३॥
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यं कुर्यां पापमहं यदि । इक्ष्वाकूणामहं लोके भवेयं कुलपांसनः ॥१४॥
यदि मात्रा कृतं पापं नाहं तदपि रोचये । इहस्थो वनदुर्गस्थं नमस्यामि कृताञ्जलिः ॥१५॥
राममेवानुगच्छामि स राजा द्विपदां वरः । त्रयाणामपि लोकानां राघवो राज्यमर्हति ॥१६॥

Overwhelmed with grief to hear the aforesaid advice (of his family priest), Bharata, who knew the right course (*viz*, to restore the kingdom to his elder brother), mentally betook himself to Śrī Rāma with intent (to get inspiration from him) to do the right thing (in the shape of waiting as a servant on his elder brother rather than superseding his claim to the throne). (9) In a voice choked with tears, the prince, who was in the prime of his youth (and therefore incapable of renunciation), lamented (as follows) in the open assembly in tones resembling the cackling of a swan and reproached his family priest (for his unjust advice and offering the kingship to a cruel and unrighteous fellow like himself):—(10) "What (sensible and knowing) man like me can usurp the kingdom of a sagacious prince (like Śrī Rāma) who has (duly) studied the Vedas with a vow of celibacy (in the house of a teacher) and gone through the ceremony of lustration after completing his studies and is applying himself to (the practice of) virtue (in the shape of redeeming the plighted word of his father)? (11) How can I, sprung from the loins of Daśaratha (who renounced his very life on being told that Śrī Rāma had not returned to Ayodhya and had left for the forest), become a usurper of the throne (of my elder brother), when not only the throne but I too belong to Śrī Rāma? (Therefore) in this conclave you ought to speak what is right. (12) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), who is not only the eldest (of us all) but the worthiest (too), whose mind is intent on piety and who vies (in eminence) with Dilīpa and Nahuṣa (two most ancient and illustrious representatives of the solar and the lunar dynasty respectively) deserves to inherit the kingdom as did Daśaratha (in the past). (13) If I perpetrate this sin (of superseding the claims of my elder brother), which is resorted to (only) by unworthy men and does not lead to heaven, I shall bring disgrace to the line of Ikṣwāku in the world. (14) I do not even approve of (much less be a party to) the sinful act (in the shape of disinheriting and banishing Śrī Rāma) that has actually been committed by my mother. (That is why) even though present here, I salute with joined palms Śrī Rāma sojourning in a forest region difficult of access. (15) I shall (therefore) follow Śrī Rāma alone. Being the foremost of men, he (alone) is the ruler (of this kingdom). (Nay) Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) deserves the sovereignty even of (all) the three worlds (*viz*, earth, heaven and the intermediate region)." (16)

तद्वाक्यं धर्मसंयुक्तं श्रुत्वा सर्वे सभासदः । हर्षान्मुमुचुरश्रूणि रामे निहितचेतसः ॥१७॥
यदि त्वार्यं न शक्ष्यामि विनिवर्तयितुं वनात् । वने तत्रैव वत्स्यामि यथाऽऽर्यो लक्ष्मणस्तथा ॥१८॥
सर्वोपायं तु वर्तिष्ये विनिवर्तयितुं बलात् । समक्षमार्यमिश्राणां साधूनां गुणवर्तिनाम् ॥१९॥
विष्टिकर्मान्तिकाः सर्वे मार्गशोधकदक्षकाः । प्रस्थापिता मया पूर्वं यात्रा च मम रोचते ॥२०॥
एवमुक्त्वा तु धर्मात्मा भरतो भ्रातृवत्सलः । समीपस्थमुवाचेदं सुमन्त्रं मन्त्रकोविदम् ॥२१॥
तूर्णमुत्थाय गच्छ त्वं सुमन्त्र मम शासनात् । यात्रामाज्ञापय क्षिप्रं बलं चैव समानय ॥२२॥
एवमुक्तः सुमन्त्रस्तु भरतेन महात्मना । प्रहृष्टः सोऽदिशत् सर्वं यथासंदिष्टमिष्टवत् ॥२३॥
ताः प्रहृष्टाः प्रकृतयो बलाध्यक्षा बलस्य च । श्रुत्वा यात्रां समाज्ञप्तां राघवस्य निवर्तने ॥२४॥

Hearing the aforesaid reply, which was in full accord with righteousness, all those who sat in the assembly shed tears through joy, their mind being absorbed in Śrī Rāma. (17) "If, however, (Bharata continued) I do not succeed in bringing my elder brother back from the forest, I shall continue in that forest itself in the same way as the noble Lakṣmaṇa is doing. (18) In the presence of the (honourable) members of this assembly, who are (all) impartial and practise good virtues, I for my part shall try every means to bring him back forcibly. (19) All expert road-clearers working on and without wages have already been despatched by me. (Hence) journeying (to the forest) alone finds favour with me." (20) Having spoken thus, the pious-minded Bharata for his part who was (so) fond of his (elder) brother, spoke as follows to Sumantra, who sat near him and was clever in giving counsel:—(21) "Getting up at once, O Sumantra, depart you under my command and issue orders (to all) to proceed on a journey (to the place where Śrī Rāma may be) and quickly send out the army too." (22) Sumantra for his part felt highly rejoiced when commanded in the foregoing words by the high-souled Bharata. He communicated (to all) everything as instructed (by Bharata) as something welcome. (23) The citizens present in the assembly as well as the generals were immensely delighted to hear of the departure (to the forest) of the army duly ordered (by Bharata) with the object of bringing Śrī Rāma back (to Ayodhya). (24)

ततो योधाङ्गनाः सर्वा भर्तॄन् सर्वान् गृहे गृहे । यात्रागमनमाज्ञाय त्वरयन्ति स्म हर्षिताः ॥२५॥
ते हयैर्गोरथैः शीघ्रं स्यन्दनैश्च मनोजवैः । सहयोषिद् बलाध्यक्षा बलं सर्वमचोदयन् ॥२६॥
सज्जं तु तद् बलं दृष्ट्वा भरतो गुरुसंनिधौ । रथं मे त्वरयस्वेति सुमन्त्रं पार्श्वतोऽब्रवीत् ॥२७॥
भरतस्य तु तस्याज्ञां परिगृह्य प्रहर्षितः । रथं गृहीत्वोपययौ युक्तं परमवाजिभिः ॥२८॥

स राघवः सत्यधृतिः प्रतापवान् ब्रुवन् सुयुक्तं दृढसत्यविक्रमः ।
गुरुं महारण्यगतं यशस्विनं प्रसादयिष्यन् भरतोऽब्रवीत् तदा ॥२९॥
तूर्णं त्वमुत्थाय सुमन्त्र गच्छ बलस्य योगाय बलप्रधानान् ।
आनेतुमिच्छामि हि तं वनस्थं प्रसाद्य रामं जगतो हिताय ॥३०॥
स सूतपुत्रो भरतेन सम्यगाज्ञापितः सम्परिपूर्णकामः ।
शशास सर्वान् प्रकृतिप्रधानान् बलस्य मुख्यांश्च सुहृज्जनं च ॥३१॥
ततः समुत्थाय कुले कुले ते राजन्यवैश्या वृषलाश्च विप्राः ।
अयूयुजन्नुष्ट्ररथान् खरांश्च नागान् हयांश्चैव कुलप्रसूतान् ॥३२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्व्यशीतितमः सर्गः ॥ ८२ ॥

Delighted to know of the expedition (of the army) on a pilgrimage (to the forest to bring back Śrī Rāma), all the wives of soldiers thereupon urged (in their eagerness to see Śrī Rāma and others back in Ayodhya) all the husbands in their own homes to make haste (to depart). (25) The aforesaid generals urged the entire army to march quickly with the womenfolk, on horseback, in bullock-carts as well as in chariots quick as thought. (26) Seeing that army ready (to depart), Bharata for his part said to Sumantra, standing by his side, in the presence of his preceptor (Sage Vasiṣṭha); "Get my chariot ready soon." (27) Bowing to the command of the celebrated Bharata and taking a chariot driven by excellent horses, Sumantra for his part approached him highly delighted (at the prospect of meeting Śrī Rāma and others as well as of their returning to Ayodhya). (28) Intending (to undertake a journey) to persuade his illustrious elder brother (Śrī Rāma), staying in a dreary forest (*viz*, the Daṇḍaka), to return (to Ayodhya) by arguing (with him) in a well-reasoned way, that glorious scion of Raghu, Bharata of unfailing firmness and unflinching veracity and prowess, spoke on that occasion (as follows):—

(29) "Getting up promptly, O Sumantra, approach you the generals of the army in order to get them equip the forces (for the journey); for, propitiating Śrī Rāma residing in the forest, I intend to bring him (back to Ayodhya) for the good of the world." (30) Commanded (as above) by Bharata and accounting (thereby) his ambition (of seeing Śrī Rāma) fully realized, Sumantra duly issued orders (accordingly) to all the leading citizens and army chiefs as well as to the friends and relations of Bharata. (31) Springing on their feet (in great eagerness) people from every house,—Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas, Śūdras and Brahmans,—thereupon got ready (for the journey) camels and chariots, donkeys and elephants, as well as horses of excellent breed. (32)

Thus ends Canto Eighty-two in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्र्यशीतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXXIII

Leaving the capital early next morning, accompanied by the family priests, artisans, army and the citizens, and covering a long distance, Bharata reaches the bank of the holy Ganga at Śṛngaverapura ruled by Guha and, encamping the army, breaks journey in order to do Śrāddha and Tarpaṇa in honour of his deceased father on the bank of the Ganga and also to give rest to his followers.

ततः समुत्थितः कल्यमास्थाय स्यन्दनोत्तमम् । प्रययौ भरतः शीघ्रं रामदर्शनकाम्यया ॥ १ ॥
अग्रतः प्रययुस्तस्य सर्वे मन्त्रिपुरोहिताः । अधिरुह्य हयैर्युक्तान् रथान् सूर्यरथोपमान् ॥ २ ॥
नवनागसहस्राणि कल्पितानि यथाविधि । अन्वयुर्भरतं यान्तमिक्ष्वाकुकुलनन्दनम् ॥ ३ ॥
षष्ठी रथसहस्राणि धन्विनो विविधायुधाः । अन्वयुर्भरतं यान्तं राजपुत्रं यशस्विनम् ॥ ४ ॥
शतं सहस्राण्यश्वानां समारूढानि राघवम् । अन्वयुर्भरतं यान्तं राजपुत्रं यशस्विनम् ॥ ५ ॥
कैकेयी च सुमित्रा च कौसल्या च यशस्विनी । रामानयनसंतुष्टा ययुर्यानेन भास्वता ॥ ६ ॥
प्रयाताश्चार्यसंघाता रामं द्रष्टुं सलक्ष्मणम् । तस्यैव च कथाश्चित्राः कुर्वाणा हृष्टमानसाः ॥ ७ ॥
मेघश्यामं महाबाहुं स्थिरसत्त्वं दृढव्रतम् । कदा द्रक्ष्यामहे रामं जगतः शोकनाशनम् ॥ ८ ॥
दृष्ट एव हि नः शोकमपनेष्यति राघवः । तमः सर्वस्य लोकस्य समुद्यन्निव भास्करः ॥ ९ ॥

Having got up from sleep at daybreak, and mounting an excellent chariot, Bharata forthwith departed with expedition with a longing to see Śrī Rāma. (1) Mounting chariots drawn by horses and vying with the car of the sun-god, all the counsellors and family priests drove ahead of him. (2) Nine thousand elephants duly caparisoned followed Bharata, the delight of Ikṣwāku's race, (even) as he moved on. (3) Sixty thousand chariots and archers armed with varied weapons (seated in them) followed the illustrious Prince Bharata (next) as he advanced. (4) A hundred thousand horses mounted by cavaliers (next) followed Prince Bharata, an illustrious scion of Raghu, as he proceeded along. (5) Kaikeyī and Sumitrā and the illustrious Kausalyā too, who were highly gratified by the thought of bringing Śrī Rāma (back from the forest) drove in a splendid chariot each. (6) Hosts of members of the twice-born classes also set out with a delighted mind in order (to be able) to see Śrī Rāma along with Lakṣmaṇa (and Sītā) and saying various things about him alone (in the following strain):—(7) "When shall we (be able to) behold the mighty-armed Śrī Rāma, dark-brown as a cloud, stable of mind and firm of resolve, the dispeller of the grief of the world? (8) As the sun disperses the darkness of the whole world (even) while fully appearing (in the horizon), Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) will surely dispel our grief the moment he is seen (by us)." (9)

इत्येवं कथयन्तस्ते सम्प्रहृष्टाः कथाः शुभाः । परिष्वजानाश्चान्योन्यं ययुर्नागरिकास्तदा ॥१०॥
ये च तत्रापरे सर्वे सम्मता ये च नैगमाः । रामं प्रतिययुर्हृष्टाः सर्वाः प्रकृतयः शुभाः ॥११॥
मणिकाराश्च ये केचित् कुम्भकाराश्च शोभनाः । सूत्रकर्मविशेषज्ञा ये च शस्त्रोपजीविनः ॥१२॥
मायूरकाः क्राकचिका वेधका रोचकास्तथा । दन्तकाराः सुधाकारा ये च गन्धोपजीविनः ॥१३॥
सुवर्णकाराः प्रख्यातास्तथा कम्बलकारकाः । स्नापकोष्णोदका वैद्या धूपकाः शौण्डिकास्तथा ॥१४॥
रजकास्तुन्नवायाश्च ग्रामघोषमहत्तराः । शैलूषाश्च सह स्त्रीभिर्यान्ति कैवर्तकास्तथा ॥१५॥
समाहिता वेदविदो ब्राह्मणा वृत्तसम्मताः । गोरथैर्भरतं यान्तमनुजग्मुः सहस्रशः ॥१६॥
सुवेषाः शुद्धवसनास्ताम्रमृष्टानुलेपिनः । सर्वे ते विमलैर्यानैः शनैर्भरतमन्वयुः ॥१७॥
प्रहृष्टमुदिता सेना सान्वयात् कैकयीसुतम् । भ्रातुरानयने यातं भरतं भ्रातृवत्सलम् ॥१८॥

Saying many good things as mentioned above on that occasion and hugging one another, highly rejoiced as they were (over the prospect of being able to see Śrī Rāma), the citizens went forth (to meet Śrī Rāma). (10) Those merchants who were held in great esteem in Ayodhya and all others who were not so honoured and (even so) all (other) good citizens joyously proceeded to meet Śrī Rāma. (11) Whatever lapidaries there were (in the city) and skilled potters, those adept in weaving and those who lived by manufacture of arms, those who made fans etc. of peacock-feathers, those who lived by the saw, those who pierced gems and pearls etc., as well as polishers (of gems, ornaments and utensils etc.), those who made articles of ivory, those who prepared lime (by burning limestone etc.) and those who lived by perfumery, highly reputed goldsmiths and weavers of blankets and other woollen goods, those who provided baths for others, masseurs, physicians, fumigators and distillers and vintners washermen and tailors, chiefs of villages and hamlets and dancers with their womenfolk as well as boatmen joined the expedition. (12—15) Brahmans remaining absorbed in meditation, well-versed in the Vedas and highly respected for their conduct followed the departing Bharata in thousands on bullock-carts. (16) Decently dressed, clad in pure raiment and having smeared their body with sandal-paste mixed with red substances (like saffron), they all followed slowly in the wake of Bharata on stainless vehicles. (17) Thrilled with joy and delighted in mind, the aforesaid army (too) followed Bharata, the son of Kaikeyī, who was (so) fond of his (elder) brother and set out on the mission of bringing his (said) brother (back from the forest). (18)

ते गत्वा दूरमध्वानं रथयानाश्वकुञ्जरैः । समासेदुस्ततो गङ्गां शृङ्गवेरपुरं प्रति ॥१९॥
यत्र रामसखा वीरो गुहो ज्ञातिगणैर्वृतः । निवसत्यप्रमादेन देशं तं परिपालयन् ॥२०॥
उपेत्य तीरं गङ्गायाश्चक्रवाकैरलंकृतम् । व्यवतिष्ठत सा सेना भरतस्यानुयायिनी ॥२१॥
निरीक्ष्यानुत्थितां सेनां तां च गङ्गां शिवोदकाम् । भरतः सचिवान् सर्वानब्रवीद् वाक्यकोविदः ॥२२॥
निवेशयत मे सैन्यमभिप्रायेण सर्वतः । विश्रान्ताः प्रतरिष्यामः श्व इमां सागरंगमाम् ॥२३॥
दातुं च तावदिच्छामि स्वर्गतस्य महीपतेः । और्ध्वदेहनिमित्तार्थमवतीर्योदकं नदीम् ॥२४॥
तस्यैवं ब्रुवतोऽमात्यास्तथेत्युक्त्वा समाहिताः । न्यवेशयंस्तांश्छन्देन स्वेन स्वेन पृथक् पृथक् ॥२५॥
निवेश्य गङ्गामनु तां महानदीं चमूं विधानैः परिबर्हशोभिनीम् ।
उवास रामस्य तदा महात्मनो विचिन्तमानो भरतो निवर्तनम् ॥२६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्र्यशीतितमः सर्गः ॥ ८३ ॥

Having covered a long distance from Ayodhya in chariots, on palanquins and on the back of horses and elephants, they reached (the bank of) the (holy) Ganga in the precincts of Śṛngaverapura, where dwelt the valiant Guha, a friend of Śrī Rāma, surrounded by hosts of his kinsmen and ruling that area with vigilance. (19-20) Having arrived at the bank of the Ganga, adorned by Chakrawāka birds, that army following in the wake of Bharata halted. (21) Seeing the aforesaid army inactive and beholding the Ganga with its holy waters, Bharata, who was a master of expression, spoke to all his ministers (as follows):—(22) "Let my army encamp at will on all sides. Having taken rest (today) we shall cross this sea-bound river tomorrow. (23) In the meantime, descending into the river, I wish to offer (libations of) water to (the spirit of) the emperor (my father), who has ascended to heaven, for happiness in his life after death." (24) Saying "Amen" to Bharata, who was speaking as above, the ministers, who were all attention, encamped the troops separately, each unit according to its liking. (25) Having caused that army, which looked charming with its equipage (in the shape of tents etc.), to encamp methodically along the bank of the great river Ganga, Bharata (too) halted then, reflecting (all the time) how to bring the high-souled Śrī Rāma back (to Ayodhya) (26)

Thus ends Canto Eighty-three in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

चतुरशीतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXXIV

Scenting mischief in the mind of Bharata, who was taking a large army with him, Guha orders the ferrymen to guard the boats so as to prevent Bharata's men from crossing the Ganga, and himself seeks the presence of Bharata in order to know his mind. Being satisfied about his good intention he entertains Bharata and his men, with fruits and roots etc. brought by him and, on his having taken rest awhile and overcome his fatigue, allows him to advance.

ततो निविष्टां ध्वजिनीं गङ्गामन्वाश्रितां नदीम् निषादराजो दृष्ट्वैव ज्ञातीन् स परितोऽब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥

महतीयमितः सेना सागराभा प्रदृश्यते । नास्यान्तमवगच्छामि मनसापि विचिन्तयन् ॥ २ ॥
यदा नु खलु दुर्बुद्धिर्भरतः स्वयमागतः । स एष हि महाकायः कोविदारध्वजो रथे ॥ ३ ॥
बन्धयिष्यति वा पाशैरथ वास्मान् वधिष्यति । अनु दाशरथिं रामं पित्रा राज्याद् विवासितम् ॥ ४ ॥
सम्पन्नां श्रियमन्विच्छंस्तस्य राज्ञः सुदुर्लभाम् । भरतः कैकयीपुत्रो हन्तुं समधिगच्छति ॥ ५ ॥
भर्ता चैव सखा चैव रामो दाशरथिर्मम । तस्यार्थकामाः संनद्धा गङ्गानूपेऽत्र तिष्ठत ॥ ६ ॥
तिष्ठन्तु सर्वदाशाश्च गङ्गामन्वाश्रिता नदीम् । बलयुक्ता नदीरक्षा मांसमूलफलाशनाः ॥ ७ ॥
नावां शतानां पञ्चानां कैवर्तानां शतं शतम् । संनद्धानां तथा यूनां तिष्ठन्त्वित्यभ्यचोदयत् ॥ ८ ॥
यदि तुष्टस्तु भरतो रामस्येह भविष्यति । इयं स्वस्तिमती सेना गङ्गामद्य तरिष्यति ॥ ९ ॥
इत्युक्त्वोपायनं गृह्य मत्स्यमांसमधूनि च । अभिचक्राम भरतं निषादाधिपतिर्गुहः ॥१०॥

The moment Guha (the chief of the Niṣādas) saw the army (of Bharata) encamped along (the bank of) the river Ganga, he now spoke (as follows) to his kinsmen sitting around him:—(1) "(Even) from this place this huge army appears like a sea. Though pondering deeply, I do not perceive its end even with the mind. (2) If Bharata,— who has surely come in person because here is seen that towering banner bearing the device of a Kovidāra tree on the chariot,—has evil intent, he will either cause us to be bound with chains or kill us, who are devoted to Śrī Rāma, (the eldest) son of Daśaratha, exiled from his kingdom by his father. (3-4) Seeking to possess the entire fortune of that monarch (Śrī Rāma), which is (otherwise) most difficult to get, Bharata, the son of Kaikeyī, has taken it into his head to kill him. (5) Śrī Rāma, son of Daśaratha, is my lord and friend too. (Therefore) seeking to advance his interests remain stationed on this bank of the Ganga, clothed with mail. (6) Let all (my) ferrymen, accompanied by troops, remain rooted to the bank of the river Ganga, guarding (access to) the river and living on meat, roots and fruits (stored in the boats). (7) And let one hundred youthful fishermen clothed with mail occupy each of the five hundred boats," so did Guha issue his commands. (8) "If, however, Bharata proves to be favourably disposed towards Śrī Rāma at this moment, this army will (be) safely (allowed to) cross the Ganga today." (9) Saying so and taking sugar-candy, the pulp of fruits and honey as an offering, Guha, the chief of the Niṣādas, proceeded to meet Bharata. (10)

तमायान्तं तु सम्प्रेक्ष्य सूतपुत्रः प्रतापवान् । भरतायाचचक्षेऽथ समयज्ञो विनीतवत् ॥११॥
एष ज्ञातिसहस्रेण स्थपतिः परिवारितः । कुशलो दण्डकारण्ये वृद्धो भ्रातुश्च ते सखा ॥१२॥
तस्मात् पश्यतु काकुत्स्थ त्वां निषादाधिपो गुहः । असंशयं विजानीते यत्र तौ रामलक्ष्मणौ ॥१३॥
एतत् तु वचनं श्रुत्वा सुमन्त्राद् भरतः शुभम् । उवाच वचनं शीघ्रं गुहः पश्यतु मामिति ॥१४॥
लब्ध्वानुज्ञां सम्प्रहृष्टो ज्ञातिभिः परिवारितः । आगम्य भरतं प्रह्वो गुहो वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१५॥
निष्कुटश्चैव देशोऽयं वञ्चिताश्चापि ते वयम् । निवेदयाम ते सर्वं स्वके दाशगृहे वस ॥१६॥
अस्ति मूलफलं चैतन्निषादैः स्वयमर्जितम् । आर्द्रं शुष्कं तथा मांसं वन्यं चोच्चावचं तथा ॥१७॥
आशंसे स्वाशिता सेना वत्स्यत्येनां विभावरीम् । अर्चितो विविधैः कामैः श्वः ससैन्यो गमिष्यसि ॥१८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुरशीतितमः सर्गः ॥ ८४ ॥

Vividly perceiving him coming, the glorious Sumantra (the son of a charioteer) for his part, who knew what is called for at a particular time, forthwith spoke to Bharata (as follows) like an humble servant:—(11) "Attended by a thousand of his kinsmen, here comes Guha, the sovereign lord of the Niṣādas, who is a senior friend of your (elder) brother (Śrī Rāma), and is closely acquainted with the Daṇḍaka forest. Therefore, allow him to see you, O scion of Kakutstha! Doubtless he knows well where the celebrated Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa may be." (12-13) Hearing this pleasing report from (the lips of) Sumantra, Bharata for his part made the following reply: "Let Guha see me at once." (14) Immensely rejoiced to receive permission (to see the prince) and approaching Bharata, Guha, who was surrounded by his kinsmen, meekly submitted as follows:—(15) "This territory is but a pleasure-grove attached to your palace and we have been taken in (by our unwariness in failing to know of your visit beforehand and thus being deprived of an opportunity to receive you in advance). We (hereby) offer you all (that we have); (pray) dwell in the house of a ferryman, which is your own. (16) Here are roots and fruits, both green and dried, procured by the Niṣādas (a tribe of fishermen, Guha's own clansmen) themselves as well as the pulp of fruits and wild cereals of various kinds. (17) I hope the army, being well fed (by us), will stay (here) tonight. Entertained with various objects of enjoyment, you (too, I hope) will leave with your army (only) tomorrow." (18)

Thus ends Canto Eighty-four in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चाशीतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXXV

Highly praising Guha, Bharata, while departing, inquires of him the way to the hermitage of Bharadwāja. Promising to follow the prince as a guide with his servants and placing his misgivings before him, Guha seeks to know his intentions about Śrī Rāma and consoles the prince, who was constantly bewailing, till dusk.

एवमुक्तस्तु भरतो निषादाधिपतिं गुहम् । प्रत्युवाच महाप्राज्ञो वाक्यं हेत्वर्थसंहितम् ॥ १ ॥
ऊर्जितः खलु ते कामः कृतो मम गुरोः सखे । यो मे त्वमीदृशीं सेनामभ्यर्चयितुमिच्छसि ॥ २ ॥
इत्युक्त्वा स महातेजा गुहं वचनमुत्तमम् । अब्रवीद् भरतः श्रीमान् पन्थानं दर्शयन् पुनः ॥ ३ ॥
कतरेण गमिष्यामि भरद्वाजाश्रमं यथा । गहनोऽयं भृशं देशो गङ्गानूपो दुरत्ययः ॥ ४ ॥
तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा राजपुत्रस्य धीमतः । अब्रवीत् प्राञ्जलिर्भूत्वा गुहो गहनगोचरः ॥ ५ ॥
दाशास्त्वनुगमिष्यन्ति देशज्ञाः सुसमाहिताः । अहं चानुगमिष्यामि राजपुत्र महाबल ॥ ६ ॥
कच्चिन्न दुष्टो व्रजसि रामस्याक्लिष्टकर्मणः । इयं ते महती सेना शङ्कां जनयतीव मे ॥ ७ ॥

Spoken to as above, Bharata, for his part, who was exceedingly wise, gave to Guha, the ruler of the Niṣādas, the following reply, which was consonant with reason and purposeful:—(1) "Indeed your great object (of according a right royal reception to me) has been accomplished in that you seek to entertain my army of such magnitude, O friend of my elder brother!" (2) Having spoken as above, the said illustrious Bharata, who was possessed of great splendour, once more addressed the following excellently-worded question to Guha, pointing to the way (ahead):—(3)

"By which of the two routes (appearing before me) shall I proceed to the hermitage of Bharadwāja? This tract of land drained by the Ganga is most thickly set with trees etc. and (as such) difficult to cross." (4) Hearing the aforesaid question of that intelligent prince (Bharata), Guha, who used to roam about in the woods, replied with joined palms (as follows):—(5) "Ferrymen who are familiar with the region and very attentive will undoubtedly accompany you. I too shall follow you (in person), O exceptionally mighty prince! (6) I hope you are not going with evil intent towards Śrī Rāma, who does great deeds without any exertion? This huge army of yours gives rise to apprehension in my mind as it were." (7)

तमेवमभिभाषन्तमाकाश इव निर्मलः । भरतः श्लक्ष्णया वाचा गुहं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ ८ ॥
मा भूत् स कालो यत् कष्टं न मां शङ्कितुमर्हसि । राघवः स हि मे भ्राता ज्येष्ठः पितृसमो मतः ॥ ९ ॥
तं निवर्तयितु यामि काकुत्स्थं वनवासिनम् । बुद्धिरन्या न मे कार्या गुह सत्यं ब्रवीमि ते ॥१०॥
स तु संहृष्टवदनः श्रुत्वा भरतभाषितम् । पुनरेवाब्रवीद् वाक्यं भरतं प्रति हर्षितः ॥११॥
धन्यस्त्वं न त्वया तुल्यं पश्यामि जगतीतले । अयत्नादागतं राज्यं यस्त्वं त्यक्तुमिहेच्छसि ॥१२॥
शाश्वती खलु ते कीर्तिर्लोकाननु चरिष्यति । यस्त्वं कृच्छ्रगतं रामं प्रत्यानयितुमिच्छसि ॥१३॥
एवं सम्भाषमाणस्य गुहस्य भरतं तदा । बभौ नष्टप्रभः सूर्यो रजनी चाभ्यवर्तत ॥१४॥
संनिवेश्य स तां सेनां गुहेन परितोषितः । शत्रुघ्नेन समं श्रीमाञ्छयनं पुनरागमत् ॥१५॥

To the aforesaid Guha, who was talking as above, Bharata, whose heart was (absolutely) taintless as the sky, replied in sweet words as follows:—(8) "May that time never come when such wickedness appears (in me). You ought not to entertain any misgiving about me; for that scion of Raghu is my elder brother and is esteemed by me as equal to my father. (9) I go to bring back Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), who is dwelling in the woods. I tell you the (bare) truth, O Guha! No other motive should be imputed to me." (10) With his face rendered extremely bright with joy on hearing Bharata's reply, Guha for his part joyfully spoke once more to Bharata as follows:—(11) "Blessed are you. I find none on the surface of this globe equal to you who seek to relinquish a kingdom come (to you) without any effort (on your part)! (12) Surely your lasting fame will extend to the spheres inasmuch as you wish to bring back (to Ayodhya) Śrī Rāma, who has fallen in adversity." (13) While Guha was conversing thus with Bharata, the sun lost its splendour and night fell. (14) Lodging the said army in camps, and soothed by Guha, the glorious Bharata then went to bed with Śatrughna. (15)

रामचिन्तामयः शोको भरतस्य महात्मनः । उपस्थितो ह्यनर्हस्य धर्मप्रेक्षस्य तादृशः ॥१६॥
अन्तर्दाहेन दहनः संतापयति राघवम् । वनदाहाग्निसंतप्तं गूढोऽग्निरिव पादपम् ॥१७॥
प्रस्रुतः सर्वगात्रेभ्यः स्वेदं शोकाग्निसम्भवम् । यथा सूर्यांशुसंतप्तो हिमवान् प्रस्रुतो हिमम् ॥१८॥
ध्याननिर्दरशैलेन विनिःश्वसितधातुना । दैन्यपादपसंघेन शोकायासाधिशृङ्गिणा ॥१९॥
प्रमोहानन्तसत्त्वेन संतापौषधिवेणुना । आक्रान्तो दुःखशैलेन महता कैकयीसुतः ॥२०॥

विनिःश्वसन् वै भृशदुर्मनास्ततः प्रमूढसंज्ञः परमापदं गतः ।
शमं न लेभे हृदयज्वरार्दितो नरर्षभो यूथहतो यथर्षभः ॥२१॥
गुहेन सार्धं भरतः समागतो महानुभावः सजनः समाहितः ।
सुदुर्मनास्तं भरतं तदा पुनर्गुहः समाश्वासयदग्रजं प्रति ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चाशीतितमः सर्गः ॥ ८५ ॥

Grief born of anxiety for Śrī Rāma and unique of its kind (now) overtook the high-souled Bharata, whose eyes were fixed on righteousness and who surely did not deserve this mental torture. (16) (Even) as a fire hidden in the hollow of a tree burns a tree (already) scorched by a forest-consuming fire, so did the fire of anxiety for Śrī Rāma inwardly begin to consume Bharata (a scion of Raghu), who was already scorched by the fire of grief caused by his father's death. (17) Bharata began to exude sweat, born of the fire of grief, from all his limbs in the same way as the Himalaya mountain heated by the sun's rays allows its snow to melt and flow. (18) Bharata (the son of Kaikeyī) was weighed down by a huge mountain of agony, consisting of a compact mass of rocks in the shape of (loving) contemplation on Śrī Rāma, which contained minerals in the shape of sighs, was clothed with a cluster of trees in the shape of recoiling of the senses from their objects and was crowned with a tall peak in the shape of languor caused by grief, infested by numberless beasts in the shape of swoons and covered by herbs and bamboos in the shape of burning of the internal and external organs of sense. (19-20) Like a bull strayed from its herd, Bharata (a jewel among men),—who, having really fallen in extreme adversity, felt miserably disconsolate, his mind being utterly confused in consequence, and was heaving sighs, afflicted as he was with anguish of heart,—found no peace (in his bed). (21) When the noble-minded Bharata, who, though composed, felt very disconsolate, got united along with his men with Guha (again), the latter reassured him once more with reference to his elder brother. (22)

Thus ends Canto Eighty-five in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षडशीतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXXVI

Guha reports to Bharata how Śrī Rāma and his party broke their journey at Śṛṅgaverapura and reproduces before him the dialogue that took place between Lakṣmaṇa and himself at night and further tells him how the two brothers entangled their locks into a thick mass, crossed the holy river with Sītā and left for the hermitage of Sage Bharadwāja.

आचचक्षेऽथ सद्भावं लक्ष्मणस्य महात्मनः । भरतायाप्रमेयाय गुहो गहनगोचरः ॥ १ ॥
तं जाग्रतं गुणैर्युक्तं वरचापेषुधारिणम् । भ्रातृगुप्त्यर्थमत्यन्तमहं लक्ष्मणमब्रुवम् ॥ २ ॥
इयं तात सुखा शय्या त्वदर्थमुपकल्पिता । प्रत्याश्वसिहि शेष्वास्यां सुखं राघवनन्दन ॥ ३ ॥
उचितोऽयं जनः सर्वो दुःखानां त्वं सुखोचितः । धर्मात्मंस्तस्य गुप्त्यर्थं जागरिष्यामहे वयम् ॥ ४ ॥
नहि रामात् प्रियतरो ममास्ति भुवि कश्चन । मोत्सुको भूर्ब्रवीम्येतदप्यसत्यं तवाग्रतः ॥ ५ ॥
अस्य प्रसादादाशंसे लोकेऽस्मिन् सुमहद् यशः । धर्मावाप्तिं च विपुलामर्थकामौ च केवलौ ॥ ६ ॥
सोऽहं प्रियसखं रामं शयानं सह सीतया । रक्षिष्यामि धनुष्पाणिः सर्वैः स्वैर्ज्ञातिभिः सह ॥ ७ ॥
नहि मेऽविदितं किंचिद् वनेऽस्मिंश्चरतः सदा । चतुरङ्गं ह्यपि बलं प्रसहेम वयं युधि ॥ ८ ॥

Guha, who used to roam about in the woods, now reported to Bharata, who was immeasurably great, the praiseworthy attitude of the high-souled Lakṣmaṇa (towards his eldest brother) :—(1) "I spoke (as follows) to Lakṣmaṇa, who is endowed with excellences (of various kinds such as devotion and obedience to his eldest brother), and was keeping vigil for the safety of his (eldest) brother (and his beloved consort), wielding an excellent bow and arrows :—(2) 'Here is a cosy bed prepared for you, O dear brother ! Be reassured (about the safety of Śrī Rāma and Sītā) and repose on it with ease, O delight of Raghu's race ! (3) All of us (your servants) are used to hardships, while you are deserving of ease. (As for Śrī Rāma) we shall keep awake for his safety, O pious-minded prince ! (4) Surely none on earth is dearer to me than Śrī Rāma. No longer be anxious (about the safety of your eldest brother and sister-in-law) : I tell you this truth in your presence. (5) Through his grace I hope to acquire very great renown in this world and to earn religious merit in abundance as well as wealth and enjoyment free from blemish. (6) As such I shall guard, bow in hand, with all my kinsmen, my beloved friend, Śrī Rāma, reposing with Sītā. (7) Surely there is nothing unknown in this forest to me, who constantly roam about in it. In fact we can withstand (here) even an army consisting of (all) the four limbs on the field of battle.' (8)

एवमस्माभिरुक्तेन लक्ष्मणेन महात्मना । अनुनीता वयं सर्वे धर्ममेवानुपश्यता ॥ ९ ॥
कथं दाशरथौ भूमौ शयाने सह सीतया । शक्या निद्रा मया लब्धुं जीवितं वा सुखानि वा ॥१०॥
यो न देवासुरैः सर्वैः शक्यः प्रसहितुं युधि । तं पश्य गुह संविष्टं तृणेषु सह सीतया ॥११॥
महता तपसा लब्धो विविधैश्च परिश्रमैः । एको दशरथस्यैष पुत्रः सदृशलक्षणः ॥१२॥
अस्मिन् प्रव्राजिते राजा न चिरं वर्तयिष्यति । विधवा मेदिनी नूनं क्षिप्रमेव भविष्यति ॥१३॥
विनद्य सुमहानादं श्रमेणोपरताः स्त्रियः । निर्घोषो विरतो नूनमद्य राजनिवेशने ॥१४॥
कौसल्या चैव राजा च तथैव जननी मम । नाशंसे यदि ते सर्वे जीवेयुः शर्वरीमिमाम् ॥१५॥

"Spoken to by us as aforesaid, the high-souled Lakṣmaṇa, who kept righteousness alone in view, politely replied to us all (in the following words) :—(9) 'How can sleep be had, or (even) life or comforts be enjoyed by me when Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha) is reposing on the ground with Sītā ? (10) Behold, O Guha, stretched on blades of grass with Sītā, him who cannot be withstood on the field of battle by all the gods and demons (gathered together) ! (11) This peerless son of Daśaratha, possessing characteristics like unto his own, was secured by virtue of great austerities and through exertions (in the shape of sacrificial undertakings) of various kinds. (12) He having been exiled, the king will not survive long and Mother Earth will surely be widowed soon enough. (13) (Nay,) having uttered a very loud cry (consequent on the emperor's death, which must already have occurred), the women must have ceased crying because of exertion; and the great noise in the palace must have surely died out by this time. (14) I do not expect that mother Kausalyā and the king and even so my (own) mother (Sumitrā)—all these will survive till this night. (15)

जीवेदपि च मे माता शत्रुघ्नस्यान्ववेक्षया । दुःखिता या हि कौसल्या वीरसूर्विनशिष्यति ॥१६॥
अतिक्रान्तमतिक्रान्तमनवाप्य मनोरथम् । राज्ये राममनिक्षिप्य पिता मे विनशिष्यति ॥१७॥

सिद्धार्थाः पितरं वृत्तं तस्मिन् काले ह्युपस्थिते । प्रेतकार्येषु सर्वेषु संस्करिष्यन्ति भूमिपम् ॥१८॥
रम्यचत्वरसंस्थानां सुविभक्तमहापथाम् । हर्म्यप्रासादसम्पन्नां सर्वरत्नविभूषिताम् ॥१९॥
गजाश्वरथसम्बाधां तूर्यनादविनादिताम् । सर्वकल्याणसम्पूर्णां हृष्टपुष्टजनाकुलाम् ॥२०॥
आरामोद्यानसम्पूर्णां समाजोत्सवशालिनीम् । सुखिता विचरिष्यन्ति राजधानीं पितुर्मम ॥२१॥
अपि सत्यप्रतिज्ञेन सार्धं कुशलिना वयम् । निवृत्ते समये ह्यस्मिन् सुखिताः प्रविशेमहि ॥२२॥

'Even if my mother survives in expectation of (the return of) Śatrughna, the afflicted Kausalyā, who has given birth to a hero (like Śrī Rāma) will surely die. (16) Failing to install Śrī Rāma on the throne (of Ayodhya) and (thus) without realizing his (long cherished) ambition, my father will expire exclaiming "Everything is past and gone !' (17) Accomplished of purpose indeed are they who will, when the time comes for it, consecrate my father, the deceased emperor, in the course of all the funeral rites. (18) And happy are they who will (in the event of my father's survival) move about in the capital of my father, the cross-roads of which are located in beautiful spots, whose main roads are clearly defined, which is richly endowed with mansions as well as with temples and palaces and adorned with all sorts of precious things, which is crowded with elephants, horses and chariots and made resonant by the sound of clarionets, which is full of all blessings and peopled by joyous and well-fed men and women, and which is rich in gardens and pleasances and looks charming with a series of festivals. (19—21) When this term (of exile) is actually over, shall we (Sītā and myself) happily return to Ayodhya along with Śrī Rāma, who has safely redeemed his promise ?' (22)

परिदेवयमानस्य तस्यैवं हि महात्मनः । तिष्ठतो राजपुत्रस्य शर्वरी सात्यवर्तत ॥२३॥
प्रभाते विमले सूर्ये कारयित्वा जटा उभौ । अस्मिन् भागीरथीतीरे सुखं संतारितौ मया ॥२४॥
जटाधरौ तौ द्रुमचीरवाससौ महाबलौ कुञ्जरयूथपोपमौ ।
वरेषुचापासिधरौ परंतपौ व्यपेक्षमाणौ सह सीतया गतौ ॥२५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षडशीतितमः सर्गः ॥ ८६ ॥

"Even while that high-souled prince (Lakṣmaṇa), who remained sitting (all the while), was lamenting as aforesaid, that night actually slipped away. (23) Next morning, when a cloudless sun appeared (in the sky), both the brothers (along with Sītā) were safely ferried by me across the stream after helping them in entangling their locks into a mass of hair (as ascetics do) on this (very) bank of the Ganga. (24) Wearing matted locks and attired in the bark of trees, (nay) wielding an excellent quiver, bow and sword, (each) and looking all round (to scan the beauty of the landscape), the two princes, who were possessed of extraordinary strength and looked like a pair of lordly elephants, and were capable of tormenting their enemy, departed with Sītā. (25)

Thus ends Canto Eighty-six in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्ताशीतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXXVII

Overwhelmed with grief to hear from the mouth of Guha how his two brothers got their hair entangled into a mass, Bharata falls unconscious on the ground. On regaining consciousness he despatches Guha to reassure mother Kausalyā, who is filled with apprehension about the safety of Śrī Rāma and his party on hearing of Bharata's swoon, and apprise her of its real cause and also of Śrī Rāma's welfare. While doing so Guha also tells her how Śrī Rāma and Sitā lay down on a bed of Kuśa grass prepared by Lakṣmaṇa with his own hands when the party broke journey at Śṛṅgaverapura and how Guha with Lakṣmaṇa kept watch the whole night for the protection of Śrī Rāma and Sitā.

गुहस्य वचनं श्रुत्वा भरतो भृशमप्रियम् । ध्यानं जगाम तत्रैव यत्र तच्छ्रुतमप्रियम् ॥ १ ॥
सुकुमारो महासत्त्वः सिंहस्कन्धो महाभुजः । पुण्डरीकविशालाक्षस्तरुणः प्रियदर्शनः ॥ २ ॥
प्रत्याश्वस्य मुहूर्तं तु कालं परमदुर्मनाः । ससाद सहसा तोत्रैर्हृदि विद्ध इव द्विपः ॥ ३ ॥
भरतं मूर्च्छितं दृष्ट्वा विवर्णवदनो गुहः । बभूव व्यथितस्तत्र भूमिकम्पे यथा द्रुमः ॥ ४ ॥
तदवस्थं तु भरतं शत्रुघ्नोऽनन्तरस्थितः । परिष्वज्य रुरोदोच्चैर्विसंज्ञः शोककर्शितः ॥ ५ ॥
ततः सर्वाः समापेतुर्मातरो भरतस्य ताः । उपवासकृशा दीना भर्तृव्यसनकर्शिताः ॥ ६ ॥

Hearing the report of Guha (about Śrī Rāma's matted locks of hair), which was most disagreeable (to hear), Bharata began to think deeply of Śrī Rāma alone, of whom that unpleasant news was heard by him (as it made him apprehensive that Śrī Rāma might not return to Ayodhya now that he had entangled his hair into a mass). (1) Having remained composed awhile, the mighty-armed prince (Bharata), for his part—who, though tender (of body), was possessed of extraordinary strength, whose shoulders resembled a lion's and who had eyes big as a lotus, and who was (both) young and pleasing of appearance,—suddenly sank to the ground extremely sad at heart, like an elephant pierced with goads in the heart. (2-3) Seeing Bharata unconscious, Guha felt shaken at that time like a tree during an earthquake, and his face grew pale. (4) Embracing Bharata, lying in that (unconscious) state, Śatrughna, for his part, who stood near by, got non-plussed, stricken as he was with grief, and loudly cried. (5) Then rushed together all the mothers of Bharata. They were emaciated through fasting, looked miserable and felt afflicted due to separation from their husband. (6)

ताश्च तं पतितं भूमौ रुदत्यः पर्यवारयन् । कौसल्या त्वनुसृत्यैनं दुर्मनाः परिषस्वजे ॥ ७ ॥
वत्सला स्वं यथा वत्समुपगुह्य तपस्विनी । परिपप्रच्छ भरतं रुदती शोकलालसा ॥ ८ ॥
पुत्र व्याधिर्न ते कच्चिच्छरीरं प्रति बाधते । अस्य राजकुलस्याद्य त्वदधीनं हि जीवितम् ॥ ९ ॥
त्वां दृष्ट्वा पुत्र जीवामि रामे सभ्रातृके गते । वृत्ते दशरथे राज्ञि नाथ एकस्त्वमद्य नः ॥१०॥
कच्चिन्न लक्ष्मणे पुत्र श्रुतं ते किंचिदप्रियम् । पुत्रे वा ह्येकपुत्रायाः सहभार्ये वनं गते ॥११॥
स मुहूर्तं समाश्वस्य रुदन्नेव महायशाः । कौसल्यां परिसान्त्व्येदं गुहं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१२॥

Nay, shedding tears they surrounded Bharata fallen on the ground. Approaching him sad at heart, Kausalyā for her part hugged him. (7) Pressing him to her bosom as a cow does its own calf, that exceedingly thoughtful lady, who was totally given up to grief, questioned Bharata (in the following words), shedding tears (all the time):—(8) "I hope no ailment (of any kind) afflicts your body. In fact, the life of this (entire) royal household hinges on you. (9) Looking on you alone, my son, do I survive. Rāma with his brother (Lakṣmaṇa) having left (for the forest) and King Daśaratha (your father) having expired, you alone are our protector today. (10) I hope nothing unwelcome has been heard by you regarding Lakṣmaṇa or my own son (Rāma),—I having only one son,—who has proceeded to the forest with his consort." (11) Returning to his normal self after an hour or so, and consoling Kausalyā (with the assurance that nothing unwelcome had been heard with reference to Lakṣmaṇa or Śrī Rāma), Bharata (the highly illustrious prince) spoke weeping all the same to Guha as follows:—(12)

भ्राता मे क्वावसद् रात्रौ क्व सीता क्व च लक्ष्मणः । अस्वपच्छयने कस्मिन् किं भुक्त्वा गुह शंस मे ॥१३॥
सोऽब्रवीद् भरतं हृष्टो निषादाधिपतिर्गुहः । यद्विधं प्रतिपेदे च रामे प्रियहितेऽतिथौ ॥१४॥
अन्नमुच्चावचं भक्ष्याः फलानि विविधानि च । रामायाभ्यवहारार्थं बहुशोऽपहृतं मया ॥१५॥
तत् सर्वं प्रत्यनुज्ञासीद् रामः सत्यपराक्रमः । न हि तत् प्रत्यगृह्णात् स क्षत्रधर्ममनुस्मरन् ॥१६॥
नह्यस्माभिः प्रतिग्राह्यं सखे देयं तु सर्वदा । इति तेन वयं सर्वे अनुनीता महात्मना ॥१७॥
लक्ष्मणेन यदानीतं पीतं वारि महात्मना । औपवास्यं तदाकार्षीद् राघवः सह सीतया ॥१८॥

"Where did my (elder) brother (Śrī Rāma) stay during the night? Where did Sītā spend the night and where Lakṣmaṇa? On what (kind of) bed and eating what did he repose? Tell me this, O Guha!" (13) Questioned thus, Guha, the ruler of the Niṣādas, thereupon joyfully told Bharata (in the following words) what kind of arrangement he had made for (feeding and reposing) his beloved and kind guest:—(14) "Boiled rice of various kinds, (other) foods requiring mastication and fruits of every description were brought by me in abundance to the presence of Śrī Rāma for his repast. (15) Śrī Rāma of unfailing prowess accepted all that (for my pleasure) and returned it to me. Bearing in mind the duty of a Kṣatriya (who is not permitted by the Śāstras to accept a gift, much less on the bank of a holy river), however, he did not partake of it. (16) 'No gift in any case is to be accepted by us (Kṣatriyas), my friend: a gift can only be made by us.' In these words were we all pacified by that high-souled prince. (17) (That) water (alone) which was brought by Lakṣmaṇa was drunk by the high-souled prince. Along with Sīta Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) then observed a fast (for the day). (18)

ततस्तु जलशेषेण लक्ष्मणोऽप्यकरोत् तदा । वाग्यतास्ते त्रयः संध्यां समुपासन्त संहिताः ॥१९॥
सौमित्रिस्तु ततः पश्चादकरोत् स्वास्तरं शुभम् । स्वयमानीय बर्हींषि क्षिप्रं राघवकारणात् ॥२०॥
तस्मिन् समाविशद् रामः स्वास्तरे सह सीतया । प्रक्षाल्य च तयोः पादौ व्यपाक्रामत् स लक्ष्मणः ॥२१॥
एतत् तदिङ्गुदीमूलमिदमेव च तत् तृणम् । यस्मिन् रामश्च सीता च रात्रिं तां शयितावुभौ ॥२२॥
नियम्य पृष्ठे तु तलाङ्गुलित्रवाञ्शरैः सुपूर्णाविषुधी परंतपः ।
महद्धनुः सज्यमुपोह्य लक्ष्मणो निशामतिष्ठत् परितोऽस्य केवलम् ॥२३॥
ततस्त्वहं चोत्तमबाणचापभृत् स्थितोऽभवं तत्र स यत्र लक्ष्मणः ।
अतन्द्रितैर्ज्ञातिभिरात्तकार्मुकैर्महेन्द्रकल्पं परिपालयंस्तदा ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्ताशीतितमः सर्गः ॥ ८७ ॥

"Then Lakṣmaṇa too forthwith slaked his thirst by means of the water that was left over. (All) the three (*viz*, Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sumantra), duly worshipped (the deity presiding over) the evening twilight silently together. (19) After that, fetching blades of Kuśa grass himself, Lakṣmaṇa for his part promptly prepared a sacred bed for Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (20) Śrī Rāma sat down on the bed with Sītā and, washing the feet of Śrī Rāma and Sītā (Śrī Rāma's with his own hands and Sītā's by giving water to her), the celebrated Lakṣmaṇa moved to a distance. (21) This is the foot of the same Ingudī tree and these are the same blades of Kuśa grass where and on which Śrī Rāma and Sītā both reposed that night. (22) Fastening at his back (one on each side) a pair of quivers fully packed with arrows and donning gloves about his hands and wielding a large stringed bow, Lakṣmaṇa, a tormentor of his foes, for his part remained walking round Śrī Rāma during the night singly. (23) Wielding excellent arrows and bow, I too remained posted where the aforesaid Lakṣmaṇa kept moving carefully guarding Śrī Rāma (who vied with Indra) with my vigilant kinsmen carrying bows (in their hands)." (24)

Thus ends Canto Eighty-seven in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टाशीतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXXVIII

Showing to Kausalyā and others the bed of Kuśa grass on which Śrī Rāma and Sītā spent their night, and contrasting it with the royal splendour and luxury in which he lived in Ayodhya, Bharata laments for him and, holding himself responsible for this turn of events and complimenting Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā for throwing their lot with Śrī Rāma and sharing his privations, makes up his mind henceforth to dwell in the forest as a representative of Śrī Rāma, wearing matted locks on his head like him.

तच्छ्रुत्वा निपुणं सर्वं भरतः सह मन्त्रिभिः । इङ्गुदीमूलमागम्य रामशय्यामवैक्षत ॥ १ ॥
अब्रवीज्जननीः सर्वा इह तस्य महात्मनः । शर्वरी शयिता भूमाविदमस्य विमर्दितम् ॥ २ ॥
महाराजकुलीनेन महाभागेन धीमता । जातो दशरथेनोर्व्यां न रामः स्वप्तुमर्हति ॥ ३ ॥
अजिनोत्तरसंस्तीर्णे वरास्तरणसंचये । शयित्वा पुरुषव्याघ्रः कथं शेते महीतले ॥ ४ ॥
प्रासादाग्रविमानेषु वलभीषु च सर्वदा । हैमराजतभौमेषु वरास्तरणशालिषु ॥ ५ ॥
पुष्पसंचयचित्रेषु चन्दनागुरुगन्धिषु । पाण्डुराभ्रप्रकाशेषु शुकसंघरुतेषु च ॥ ६ ॥
प्रासादवरवर्येषु शीतवत्सु सुगन्धिषु । उषित्वा मेरुकल्पेषु कृतकाञ्चनभित्तिषु ॥ ७ ॥
गीतवादित्रनिर्घोषैर्वराभरणनिःस्वनैः । मृदङ्गवरशब्दैश्च सततं प्रतिबोधितः ॥ ८ ॥
वन्दिभिर्वन्दितः काले बहुभिः सूतमागधैः । गाथाभिरनुरूपाभिः स्तुतिभिश्च परंतपः ॥ ९ ॥

Hearing all that attentively and reaching the foot of the Ingudī tree with the (king's) counsellors, Bharata saw Śrī Rāma's bed. (1) He said to all his mothers, "Here was the night spent by that high-souled prince lying on the ground. These are the blades of Kuśa grass crushed by his body (while reposing on them). (2) Śrī Rāma, who was procreated by the wise and highly blessed Daśaratha born in the line of great kings, does not deserve to sleep on the ground (without any shade or couch). (3) Having reposed (all along) on a bed consisting of a pile of excellent rugs and covered with an outermost covering of (superb) deerskin (fit for kings), how does Śrī Rāma (a tiger among men) sleep on the ground? (4) Sleeping always on the topmost storey of palaces built after the style of aerial çars and in turrets and in the foremost apartments of excellent seven-storeyed buildings—which were provided with floors paved with gold and silver and furnished with excellent carpets, which looked picturesque with heaps of flowers and were fragrant with the odour of sandalwood and aloe, which shone like white clouds and were noisy with the chatter of flocks of parrots, where (natural) coolness prevailed and which emitted a sweet fragrance (of camphor etc.), nay, which vied with Mount Meru (in height) and whose walls were inlaid with gold,—he was awakened every day by the strains of vocal and instrumental music, the tinkling of excellent jewels and the excellent sound of clay tomtoms. (5—8) (Again) Śrī Rāma (the tormentor of his enemy) was glorified at the time of waking by a number of panegyrists, bards and minstrels through appropriate verses and songs of praise. (9)

अश्रद्धेयमिदं लोके न सत्यं प्रतिभाति मा । मुह्यते खलु मे भावः स्वप्नोऽयमिति मे मतिः ॥१०॥
न नूनं दैवतं किंचित् कालेन बलवत्तरम् । यत्र दाशरथी रामो भूमावेवमशेत सः ॥११॥
यस्मिन् विदेहराजस्य सुता च प्रियदर्शना । दयिता शयिता भूमौ स्नुषा दशरथस्य च ॥१२॥
इयं शय्या मम भ्रातुरिदमावर्तितं शुभम् । स्थण्डिले कठिने सर्वं गात्रैर्विमृदितं तृणम् ॥१३॥
मन्ये साभरणा सुप्ता सीतास्मिञ्शयने शुभा । तत्र तत्र हि दृश्यन्ते सक्ताः कनकबिन्दवः ॥१४॥
उत्तरीयमिहासक्तं सुव्यक्तं सीतया तदा । तथा ह्येते प्रकाशन्ते सक्ताः कौशेयतन्तवः ॥१५॥
मन्ये भर्तुः सुखा शय्या येन बाला तपस्विनी । सुकुमारी सती दुःखं न विजानाति मैथिली ॥१६॥

"This is incredible in the world and does not appear true to me. My mind is really confused. My conclusion therefore is that this is a dream. (10) Surely there is no deity more powerful than Time (the will of God), impelled by which the aforesaid Śrī Rāma, son of Daśaratha, reposes on the ground in this way and by force of which the daughter of Janaka (the king of the Videha territory), who is (so) pleasing to the sight and the beloved daughter-in-law of Daśaratha, has to lie down on the ground. (11-12) This is the bed of my (elder) brother and here are the blessed marks of his changing sides in the form of all the blades of (Kuśa) grass crushed by his limbs against the hard ground. (13) I suppose the blessed Sitā lay down decked with ornaments on this bed; for here and there are seen stuck (to the grass) particles of gold. (14) Sītā quite evidently had her upper garment entangled with these blades at that time. That is why these silk threads appear stuck to them. (15) I conclude the husband's bed (be it soft or hard) is comfortable (at all events to a devoted wife), as (is evident from the fact that) Sītā (the princess of Mithilā) though youthful and tender, experiences no smart (even while reposing on such a hard and rough bed), virtuous as she is and devoted to austerities. (16)

हा हतोऽस्मि नृशंसोऽस्मि यत् सभार्यः कृते मम । ईदृशीं राघवः शय्यामधिशेते ह्यनाथवत् ॥१७॥
सार्वभौमकुले जातः सर्वलोकसुखावहः । सर्वप्रियकरस्त्यक्त्वा राज्यं प्रियमनुत्तमम् ॥१८॥

कथमिन्दीवरश्यामो रक्ताक्षः प्रियदर्शनः । सुखभागी न दुःखार्हः शयितो भुवि राघवः ॥१९॥
धन्यः खलु महाभागो लक्ष्मणः शुभलक्षणः । भ्रातरं विषमे काले यो राममनुवर्तते ॥२०॥
सिद्धार्था खलु वैदेही पतिं यानुगता वनम् । वयं संशयिताः सर्वे हीनास्तेन महात्मना ॥२१॥
अकर्णधारा पृथिवी शून्येव प्रतिभाति मे । गते दशरथे स्वर्गे रामे चारण्यमाश्रिते ॥२२॥
न च प्रार्थयते कश्चिन्मनसापि वसुंधराम् । वने निवसतस्तस्य बाहुवीर्याभिरक्षिताम् ॥२३॥
शून्यसंवरणारक्षामयन्त्रितहयद्विपाम् । अनावृतपुरद्वारां राजधानीमरक्षिताम् ॥२४॥
अप्रहृष्टबलां शून्यां विषमस्थामनावृताम् । शत्रवो नाभिमन्यन्ते भक्ष्यान् विषकृतानिव ॥२५॥

"Alas, I am ruined. Cruel am I in that on my account Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) with his wife has to lie down on such a (hard) bed like a forlorn creature! (17) Relinquishing his beloved rulership, which is unsurpassed, how did Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), born in a line of universal monarchs, who brings happiness to the whole world and does good to all, who is blue as a lotus, has reddish eyes and is pleasing of appearance and who is deserving of happiness and unworthy of suffering, lie down on the ground? (18-19) Blessed and highly fortunate indeed is Lakṣmaṇa, endowed with auspicious bodily marks, who is follwing his (eldest) brother in a critical period (of his life)! (20) Truly accomplished of purpose is Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom), who followed (her husband to the forest! We are (however) all plunged in doubt (as to getting a chance to serve him), bereft as we are of that high-souled prince. (21) Emperor Daśaratha having ascended to heaven and Śrī Rāma having taken up his abode in the forest, the earth appears desolate to me like a boat without a pilot. (22) Nor does anyone lay claim even with his mind to (the sovereignty of) the globe, which stands protected on all sides by the (very) might of arms of Śrī Rāma dwelling in the forest. (23) The enemies do not claim as their own, any more than one would like to have articles made of poisoned food, the capital (Ayodhya), whose protective wall is lying undefended, the horses and elephants in which roam about uncontrolled, whose entrances are never closed and the troops stationed in which are cheerless, and as such which is (altogether) unprotected, unguarded, desolate and reduced to a wretched condition. (24-25)

अद्यप्रभृति भूमौ तु शयिष्येऽहं तृणेषु वा । फलमूलाशनो नित्यं जटाचीराणि धारयन् ॥२६॥
तस्याहमुत्तरं कालं निवत्स्यामि सुखं वने । तत् प्रतिश्रुतमार्यस्य नैव मिथ्या भविष्यति ॥२७॥
वसन्तं भ्रातुरर्थाय शत्रुघ्नो मानुवत्स्यति । लक्ष्मणेन सहायोध्यामार्यो मे पालयिष्यति ॥२८॥
अभिषेक्ष्यन्ति काकुत्स्थमयोध्यायां द्विजातयः । अपि मे देवताः कुर्युरिमं सत्यं मनोरथम् ॥२९॥
प्रसाद्यमानः शिरसा मया स्वयं बहुप्रकारं यदि न प्रपत्स्यते ।
ततोऽनुवत्स्यामि चिराय राघवं वनेचरं नार्हति मामुपेक्षितुम् ॥३०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टाशीतितमः सर्गः ॥ ८८ ॥

"From this day onward I shall lie down on the (bare) ground or on blades of grass, living on fruits and roots (alone) from day to day and wearing matted hair (on my head) and the bark of trees (on my person). (26) I shall comfortably dwell in the forest for the rest of the period of Śrī Rāma's exile (as his representative). (In that way) the well-known vow of my elder brother will not be belied. (27) Śatrughna will dwell with me when I live (in the forest) on behalf of my (elder) brother; while the latter with Lakṣmaṇa will protect Ayodhya. (28) The Brahmans will install Srī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) on the throne of Ayodhya. May the gods fulfil this desire of mine. (29) If he does not agree (to return to Ayodhya) even when being solicited by me personally in many ways with my head bent low, in that case I shall dwell with Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) for any length of time so long as he roams about in the forest. He ought not to disregard me (I think)." (30)

Thus ends Canto Eighty-eight in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकोननवतितमः सर्गः

Canto LXXXIX

Having encamped his followers including the army, that were ferried across the Ganga by the fishermen enjoined by Guha, Bharata sets out with Sage Vasiṣṭha and others to the hermitage of Sage Bharadwāja with intent to see the latter.

व्युष्य रात्रिं तु तत्रैव गङ्गाकूले स राघवः । काल्यमुत्थाय शत्रुघ्नमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
शत्रुघ्नोत्तिष्ठ किं शेषे, निषादाधिपतिं गुहम् । शीघ्रमानय भद्रं ते तारयिष्यति वाहिनीम् ॥ २ ॥
जागर्मि नाहं स्वपिमि तथैवार्यं विचिन्तयन् । इत्येवमब्रवीद् भ्राता शत्रुघ्नो विप्रचोदितः ॥ ३ ॥
इति संवदतोरेवमन्योन्यं नरसिंहयोः । आगम्य प्राञ्जलिः काले गुहो वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ ४ ॥
कच्चित् सुखं नदीतीरेऽवात्सीः काकुत्स्थ शर्वरीम् । कच्चिच्च सहसैन्यस्य तव सर्वमनामयम् ॥ ५ ॥
गुहस्य तत् तु वचनं श्रुत्वा स्नेहादुदीरितम् । रामस्यानुवशो वाक्यं भरतोऽपीदमब्रवीत् ॥ ६ ॥

Having spent the night at that very spot (where Śrī Rāma had rested not long ago) on the bank of the Ganga and rising at daybreak, the said Bharata for his part spoke to Śatrughna as follows:—(1) "How do you (continue to) sleep (till now)? Get up, O Śatrughna, and fetch Guha, the ruler of the Niṣādas, quickly; so that he will convey the army to the other bank. May all be well with you." (2) "Contemplating on Śrī Rāma (my eldest half-brother) even as you are, I am keeping awake, not sleeping." In these very words did Śatrughna, Bharata's (younger half-) brother, reply when admonished (as above) by Bharata. (3) Arriving at an opportune moment while Bharata and Śatrughna (the two lions among men) were conversing with each other as aforesaid, Guha submitted (to Bharata) with joined palms as follows:—(4) "I hope you spent the night comfortably on the river bank, O scion of Kakutstha. And I hope you are entirely free from distemper along with your army." (5) Hearing the aforesaid question asked with affection by Guha, Bharata too, for his part, who had subordinated his will to Śrī Rāma, made the following reply:—(6)

सुखा नः शर्वरी धीमन् पूजिताश्चापि ते वयम् । गङ्गां तु नौभिर्बह्वीभिर्दाशाः संतारयन्तु नः ॥ ७ ॥
ततो गुहः संत्वरितः श्रुत्वा भरतशासनम् । प्रतिप्रविश्य नगरं तं ज्ञातिजनमब्रवीत् ॥ ८ ॥
उत्तिष्ठत प्रबुध्यध्वं भद्रमस्तु हि वः सदा । नावः समुपकर्षध्वं तारयिष्यामि वाहिनीम् ॥ ९ ॥
ते तथोक्ताः समुत्थाय त्वरिता राजशासनात् । पञ्च नावां शतान्येव समानिन्युः समन्ततः ॥१०॥
अन्याः स्वस्तिकविज्ञेया महाघण्टाधरा वराः । शोभमानाः पताकिन्यो युक्तवाहाः सुसंहताः ॥११॥
ततः स्वस्तिकविज्ञेयां पाण्डुकम्बलसंवृताम् । सनन्दिघोषां कल्याणीं गुहो नावमुपाहरत् ॥१२॥

"It was a happy night for us, O sagacious friend, and we have been (properly) entertained by you. Let (your) fishermen now duly ferry us across the Ganga on a number of boats." (7) Hearing Bharata's command and returning to the city with great expedition, Guha forthwith spoke (as follows) to his said kinsmen:—(8) "Wake up and rise: may prosperity ever actually attend you. Duly haul the boats to the bank, I shall have the army ferried across (the Ganga)." (9) Springing up on their feet when addressed thus (by Guha), the boatmen hurriedly brought together from all sides in obedience to their chief's command five hundred boats and other excellent boats (too), known by the name of 'Swastika' (because of their bearing the mark of Swastika), which looked charming, were distinguished by flags and equipped with rowers, (nay) which were strongly built and had large bells (tied to their sails). (10-11) Then Guha (himself) brought a lovely boat (also) known by the name of 'Swastika', the floor of which was covered with white rugs (fit for kings) and which was distinguished by the sound of festal music. (12)

तामारुरोह भरतः शत्रुघ्नश्च महाबलः । कौसल्या च सुमित्रा च याश्चान्या राजयोषितः ॥१३॥
पुरोहितश्च तत्पूर्वं गुरवो ब्राह्मणाश्च ये । अनन्तरं राजदारास्तथैव शकटापणाः ॥१४॥
आवासमादीपयतां तीर्थं चाप्यवगाहताम् । भाण्डानि चाददानानां घोषस्तु दिवमस्पृशत् ॥१५॥
पताकिन्यस्तु ता नावः स्वयं दाशैरधिष्ठिताः । वहन्त्यो जनमारूढं तदा सम्पेतुराशुगाः ॥१६॥
नारीणामभिपूर्णास्तु काश्चित् काश्चित् तु वाजिनाम् । काश्चित् तत्र वहन्ति स्म यानयुग्यं महाधनम् ॥१७॥
तास्तु गत्वा परं तीरमवरोप्य च तं जनम् । निवृत्ताः काण्डचित्राणि क्रियन्ते दाशबन्धुभिः ॥१८॥

Bharata and Śatrughna, who was possessed of great might, as well as Kausalyā, Sumitrā and whatever other royal ladies there were ascended it. (13) Sage Vasiṣṭha (the family priest) and whatever elderly Brahmans were present (there) took their seats (even) before Bharata and the royal ladies and immediately after (these) followed the (other) ladies of the royal family as well as the bullock-carts and the provisions (which were loaded on other boats). (14) The din of men setting fire* to the huts (erected for them) as well as resorting to the descent (in order to be able to ascend the boats) and collecting the utensils (in order to load them) actually rose to the skies. (15) Ferrying the men seated (in them), those swift-going boats, which were adorned with flags and controlled by the fishermen, then sailed automatically (as it were). (16) Some boats were full of women, while others were loaded with horses; while some (more) of them ferried costly chariots and animals of draught. (17) Having reached the opposite bank and enabled those men etc. to land, the boats for their part returned and were plied as (so many) toy-boats on water by the rowers, who were all kinsmen of Guha. (18)

---

* It has been a convention among Indian troops in the past to burn whatever is left in the shape of huts and fuel etc. after removing their essential things and tents while leaving a halting place in the course of their march to a destination. The idea is not to leave any trace of their whereabouts fot the enemy. The practice was also believed to bring triumyh to the troops who resorted to it.

सवैजयन्तास्तु गजा गजारोहैः प्रचोदिताः । तरन्तः स्म प्रकाशन्ते सपक्षा इव पर्वताः ॥१९॥
नावश्चारुरुहुस्त्वन्ये प्लवैस्तेरुस्तथापरे । अन्ये कुम्भघटैस्तेरुरन्ये तेरुश्च बाहुभिः ॥२०॥
सा पुण्या ध्वजिनी गङ्गां दाशैः संतारिता स्वयम् । मैत्रे मुहूर्ते प्रययौ प्रयागवनमुत्तमम् ॥२१॥
आश्वासयित्वा च चमूं महात्मा निवेशयित्वा च यथोपजोषम् ।
द्रष्टुं भरद्वाजमृषिप्रवर्यमृत्विक्सदस्यैर्भरतः प्रतस्थे ॥२२॥
स ब्राह्मणस्याश्रममभ्युपेत्य महात्मनो देवपुरोहितस्य ।
ददर्श रम्योटजवृक्षदेशं महद्वनं विप्रवरस्य रम्यम् ॥२३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकोननवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ८९ ॥

Swimming (across the Ganga) as urged by their mahouts, the elephants with flags (on their back) actually shone like winged mountains. (19) Nay, other men took their seats on boats while others crossed the river by means of rafts; still others swam across with the help of big and small earthen vessels and the rest swam with their arms (alone). (20) Ferried across the Ganga by the fishermen themselves, that holy army (which was hallowed through contact with holy men like Prince Bharata and Sage Vasiṣṭha as well as through a bath in the Ganga and other sacred streams and was proceeding on the holy mission of bringing Śrī Rāma back to Ayodhya) marched towards the excellent forest encircling Prayag during the hour known by the name of Maitra* (because of its being sacred to Mitra, the sun-god). (21) Nay, cheering up the troops and comfortably encamping them (in the forest encircling Prayag), the high-souled Bharata along with the priests and the (king's) councillors set out to meet Bharadwāja, the foremost of Ṛṣis (the seers of Vedic Mantras). (22) Reaching the hermitage of the high-souled Bharadwāja† (the family priest of gods), who was not only a knower of Brahma but also the foremost of Vedic scholars,‡ Bharata saw the extensive and delightful grove (surrounding the hermitage) consisting of clusters of trees interspersed with lovely huts of leafy twigs. (23)

Thus ends Canto Eighty-nine in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

---

* A Muhūrta, loosely translated as an hour, really consists of 48 minutes. There are fifteen such Muhūrtas in a day. They are named in order by Bṛhaspati as Raudra, Sārpa, Maitra, Paitra, Vāsava, Āpya, Vaiśwa, Brāhma, Prāja, Īśa, Aindra, Aindrāgna, Nairṛta, Vāruṇāryamaṇa and Bhagī.

रौद्रः सार्पस्तथा मैत्रः पैत्रो वासव एव च । आप्यो वैश्वस्तथा ब्राह्मः प्राजेशैन्द्रास्तथैव च ॥
ऐन्द्राग्नो नैर्ऋतश्चैव वारुणार्यमणो भगी । एतेऽह्नि क्रमशो ज्ञेया मुहूर्ता दश पञ्च च ॥

† Bharadwāja is referred to as a family priest of gods because he was sprung from the loins of Sage Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of gods.

‡ A Smṛti-text says:—

जन्मना जायते शूद्रः कर्मणा जायते द्विजः । वेदाभ्यासेन विप्रत्वं ब्रह्म जानाति ब्राह्मणः ॥

"By birth (even) a Brahman boy is born as a Śudra; he is spoken of as a Dwija (a twice-born) on his following the vocation of a Brahman; he attains the status of a Vipra through a (thorough) study of the Vedas and is known as a Brahman (only) when he comes to know (the truth of) Brahma (the Absolute)."

नवतितमः सर्गः

Canto XC

Leaving his party a couple of miles away on this side of the hermitage, Bharata enters it with Vasiṣṭha and Śatrughna. After exchange of compliments between Sages Vasiṣṭha and Bharadwāja Bharata bows down at the feet of the latter, who inquires his health and seeks to know his mind about Śrī Rāma. Bharata thereupon regretfully apprises him of his intention to bring Rāma back from the forest and questions him about his whereabouts. To this the sage replies that Śrī Rāma was sojourning on Mount Chitrakoot, and advises Bharata to see the latter the following morning.

भरद्वाजाश्रमं गत्वा क्रोशादेव नरर्षभः । जनं सर्वमवस्थाप्य जगाम सह मन्त्रिभिः ॥ १ ॥
पद्भ्यामेव तु धर्मज्ञो न्यस्तशस्त्रपरिच्छदः । वसानो वाससी क्षौमे पुरोधाय पुरोहितम् ॥ २ ॥
ततः संदर्शने तस्य भरद्वाजस्य राघवः । मन्त्रिणस्तानवस्थाप्य जगामानुपुरोहितम् ॥ ३ ॥
वसिष्ठमथ दृष्ट्वैव भरद्वाजो महातपाः । संचचालासनात् तूर्णं शिष्यानर्घ्यमिति ब्रुवन् ॥ ४ ॥
समागम्य वसिष्ठेन भरतेनाभिवादितः । अबुध्यत महातेजाः सुतं दशरथस्य तम् ॥ ५ ॥
ताभ्यामर्घ्यं च पाद्यं च दत्त्वा पश्चात् फलानि च । आनुपूर्व्याच्च धर्मज्ञः पप्रच्छ कुशलं कुले ॥ ६ ॥
अयोध्यायां बले कोशे मित्रेष्वपि च मन्त्रिषु । जानन् दशरथं वृत्तं न राजानमुदाहरत् ॥ ७ ॥

Having reached the precincts of the hermitage of Bharadwāja and leaving all his people only a couple of miles away (on this side of the hermitage so as not to cause disturbance to the hermits living peacefully there), Bharata (a jewel among men), for his part, who knew what is right, proceeded (further) with his counsellors on foot, placing Sage Vasiṣṭha (his family priest) ahead and putting on only a pair of silk garments (*viz*, a loin-cloth and an outer covering), laying aside his weapons and ornaments etc. (1-2) Bidding the aforesaid counsellors stay behind, the moment the celebrated Bharadwāja was clearly in sight, Bharata (a scion of Raghu) then proceeded at the heels of Vasiṣṭha (his family priest). (3) At the very sight of Vasiṣṭha, Bharadwāja, who practised great austerities, at once hurriedly rose from his seat, asking his pupils to fetch water to wash the hands (of the distinguished guests) with. (4) Uniting (in embrace) with Vasiṣṭha and greeted by Bharata, the highly glorious sage inferred him to be a son of Daśaratha. (5) Offering to the two guests in order of seniority (one after another) water to wash their hands and feet with and also fruits afterwards, Bharadwāja (who knows what is right) made inquiries concerning the welfare of the family (of each) and also whether all was well with (the city of) Ayodhya, the army, the exchequer, the (king's) allies and ministers. Knowing (as he did) Daśaratha to be dead, he made no inquiries concerning the king. (6-7)

वसिष्ठो भरतश्चैनं पप्रच्छतुरनामयम् । शरीरेऽग्निषु शिष्येषु वृक्षेषु मृगपक्षिषु ॥८॥
तथेति तु प्रतिज्ञाय भरद्वाजो महायशाः । भरतं प्रत्युवाचेदं राघवस्नेहबन्धनात् ॥९॥
किमिहागमने कार्यं तव राज्यं प्रशासतः । एतदाचक्ष्व सर्वं मे न हि मे शुध्यते मनः ॥१०॥
सुषुवे यममित्रघ्नं कौसल्याऽऽनन्दवर्धनम् । भ्रात्रा सह सभार्यो यश्चिरं प्रव्राजितो वनम् ॥११॥
नियुक्तः स्त्रीनिमित्तेन पित्रा योऽसौ महायशाः । वनवासी भवेतीह समाः किल चतुर्दश ॥१२॥
कच्चिन्न तस्यापापस्य पापं कर्तुमिहेच्छसि । अकण्टकं भोक्तुमना राज्यं तस्यानुजस्य च ॥१३॥

Vasiṣṭha and Bharata (in return) inquired whether all was well with his body, sacred fires, pupils, trees, deer and birds. (8) Having admitted that it was so, the highly illustrious Bharadwāja for his part replied to Bharata as follows, impelled as he was by the ties of affection that he bore to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu):—(9) "What motive could you have in coming (all the way) to this place, busy as you must have been ruling the kingdom (of Ayodhya)? (Please) tell me all this; for my mind is not getting cleared of doubts (about your intentions towards Śrī Rāma). (10) Seeking to enjoy the kingdom (rightfully) belonging to Śrī Rāma without any thorn (in your side), I hope, you do not intend to do (any bodily) harm in this forest to Lakṣmaṇa (his younger brother) and the highly illustrious prince Śrī Rāma (himself), the destroyer of enemies and the promoter of joy in this world, whom Kausalyā gave birth to, and who, having been urged, they say, by his father through the instrumentality of the latter's wife (Kaikeyī) in the following words: "Dwell in the forest for fourteen years', was exiled to the forest with his (younger) brother (Lakṣmaṇa) and wife (Sītā) to the forest for a long term." (11-13)

एवमुक्तो भरद्वाजं भरतः प्रत्युवाच ह । पर्यश्रुनयनो दुःखाद् वाचा संसज्जमानया ॥१४॥
हतोऽस्मि यदि मामेवं भगवानपि मन्यते । मत्तो न दोषमाशङ्के मैवं मामनुशाधि हि ॥१५॥
न चैतदिष्टं माता मे यदवोचन्मदन्तरे । नाहमेतेन तुष्टश्च न तद्वचनमाददे ॥१६॥
अहं तु तं नरव्याघ्रमुपयातः प्रसादकः । प्रतिनेतुमयोध्यायां पादौ चास्याभिवन्दितुम् ॥१७॥
तं मामेवंगतं मत्वा प्रसादं कर्तुमर्हसि । शंस मे भगवन् रामः क्व सम्प्रति महीपतिः ॥१८॥

Spoken to as aforesaid, Bharata, they say, replied (as follows) in a faltering tone with tears flowing from his eyes through agony:—(14) "I am ruined if Your Holiness too (who is omniscient) reckons me as such. I cannot (even) think of any harm having proceeded from me (to Śrī Rāma). Therefore (please) do not speak in this strain to me. (15) Neither is that which my mother said during my absence (at my maternal grandfather's) agreeable to me nor am I pleased with that (which she has done), nor (again) have I (even now) accepted her word (asking me to enjoy the sovereignty of Ayodhya). (16) I have on the other hand come to take that tiger among men back to Ayodhya after having propitiated him, and (also) to bow down at his feet. (17) Believing me as such to have come with the aforesaid intention, you ought to be gracious to me. (Also kindly) tell me, venerable sir, where Emperor Rāma may at present be." (18)

वसिष्ठादिभिर्ऋत्विग्भिर्याचितो भगवांस्ततः । उवाच तं भरद्वाजः प्रसादाद् भरतं वचः ॥१९॥
त्वय्येतत् पुरुषव्याघ्र युक्तं राघववंशजे । गुरुवृत्तिर्दमश्चैव साधूनां चानुयायिता ॥२०॥

जाने चैतन्मनःस्थं ते दृढीकरणमस्त्विति । अपृच्छं त्वां तवात्यर्थं कीर्तिं समभिवर्धयन् ॥२१॥
जाने च रामं धर्मज्ञं ससीतं सहलक्ष्मणम् । अयं वसति ते भ्राता चित्रकूटे महागिरौ ॥२२॥
श्वस्तु गन्तासि तं देशं वसाद्य सह मन्त्रिभिः । एतं मे कुरु सुप्राज्ञ कामं कामार्थकोविद ॥२३॥
ततस्तथेत्येवमुदारदर्शनः प्रतीतरूपो भरतोऽब्रवीद् वचः ।
चकार बुद्धिं च तदाश्रमे तदा निशानिवासाय नराधिपात्मजः ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे नवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ९० ॥

Solicited by the priests (who had obviously joined the party in the meantime) headed by Vasiṣṭha, the venerable Bharadwāja thereupon graciously spoke to the celebrated Bharata as follows:—(19) "Service to your elders as also self-control and walking in the footsteps of the virtuous—this is worthy of you, descended (as you are) in the line of Raghu, O tiger among men! (20) I (already) knew (by my yogic power) that which existed in your mind. (All the same) I questioned you (as though I knew nothing) in order that your resolution may be strengthened and in order further to enchance your renown beyond measure. (21) I know where Śrī Rāma, who knows what is right, is staying accompanied by Sītā and followed by Lakṣmaṇa. Your brother is dwelling at present on the great Chitrakoot mountain. (22) You will certainly proceed to that area tomorrow. Halt here with your counsellors today. Grant this desire of mine, O highly sagacious prince knowing how to fulfil the desired object (of your friends and well-wishers)!" (23) Thereupon Bharata, who had a broad outlook and whose reality (as a devotee of Śrī Rāma) had (now) come to be known, replied as follows: "So be it." Nay, the prince forthwith made up his mind to stay in that hermitage during the night. (24)

Thus ends Canto Ninety in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकनवतितमः सर्गः

Canto XCI

The hospitality shown by Sage Bharadwāja, who had acquired rare mystic powers by virtue of his austerities, to Bharata, his army and entourage, the kind of which could not be shown even by a ruler of the entire globe.

कृतबुद्धिं निवासाय तत्रैव स मुनिस्तदा । भरतं कैकयीपुत्रमातिथ्येन न्यमन्त्रयत् ॥ १ ॥
अब्रवीद् भरतस्त्वेनं नन्विदं भवता कृतम् । पाद्यमर्घ्यमथातिथ्यं वने यदुपपद्यते ॥ २ ॥
अथोवाच भरद्वाजो भरतं प्रहसन्निव । जाने त्वां प्रीतिसंयुक्तं तुष्येस्त्वं येन केनचित् ॥ ३ ॥
सेनायास्तु तवैवास्याः कर्तुमिच्छामि भोजनम् । मम प्रीतिर्यथारूपा त्वमर्हो मनुजर्षभ ॥ ४ ॥
किमर्थं चापि निक्षिप्य दूरे बलमिहागतः । कस्मान्नेहोपयातोऽसि सबलः पुरुषर्षभ ॥ ५ ॥
भरतः प्रत्युवाचेदं प्राञ्जलिस्तं तपोधनम् । न सैन्येनोपयातोऽस्मि भगवन् भगवद्भयात् ॥ ६ ॥
राज्ञा हि भगवन् नित्यं राजपुत्रेण वा तथा । यत्नतः परिहर्तव्या विषयेषु तपस्विनः ॥ ७ ॥

वाजिमुख्या मनुष्याश्च मत्ताश्च वरवारणाः । प्रच्छाद्य भगवन् भूमिं महतीमनुयान्ति माम् ॥ ८ ॥
ते वृक्षानुदकं भूमिमाश्रमेषूटजांस्तथा । न हिंस्युरिति तेनाहमेक एवागतस्ततः ॥ ९ ॥

The celebrated sage then invited to a hospitable reception Bharata, the son of Kaikeyī, who had made up his mind (as shown before) to stay in that very hermitage (for the night). (1) Bharata for his part said to Bharadwāja, "Sure enough the (kind of) hospitality which could (possibly) be arranged in a forest has (already) been shown by you (to us) just now in the form of water to wash our feet and hands with." (2) Bharadwāja forthwith replied to Bharata (as follows) laughing heartily as it were : "I know you to be full of affection (to me). As such) you are likely to be pleased with anything and everything (that is offered to you). (3) I, however, only wish to feed this army of yours. And you ought to do that in which my pleasure lies, O jewel among men ! (4) Moreover, wherefore did you come here encamping the army at a distance (from my hermitage) ? Why did you not turn up here, army and all, O jewel among men ?" (5) Bharata with joined palms replied as follows to the sage, whose (only) wealth was his asceticism :—"I did not turn up with the army for fear of (displeasing) you; O venerable sage ! (6) In fact, ascetics should always be scrupulously shunned in their own lands by a king or a king's son under similar circumstances, Your Holiness ! (7) Best specimens of horses as well as men and excellent elephants in rut are following in my wake occupying a large area. (8) I came away from that place (where the troops have been encamped) all alone (accompanied by Sage Vasiṣṭha) lest they should destroy the trees, foul the waters and land as well as the huts in the hermitage." (9)

आनीयतामितः सेनेत्याज्ञप्तः परमर्षिणा । तथानुचक्रे भरतः सेनायाः समुपागमम् ॥१०॥
अग्निशालां प्रविश्याथ पीत्वापः परिमृज्य च । आतिथ्यस्य क्रियाहेतोर्विश्वकर्माणमाह्वयत् ॥११॥
आह्वये विश्वकर्माणमहं त्वष्टारमेव च । आतिथ्यं कर्तुमिच्छामि तत्र मे संविधीयताम् ॥१२॥
आह्वये लोकपालांस्त्रीन् देवाञ् शक्रपुरोगमान् । आतिथ्यं कर्तुमिच्छामि तत्र मे संविधीयताम् ॥१३॥
प्राक्स्रोतसश्च या नद्यस्तिर्यक्स्रोतस एव च । पृथिव्यामन्तरिक्षे च समायान्त्वद्य सर्वशः ॥१४॥
अन्याः स्रवन्तु मैरेयं सुरामन्याः सुनिष्ठिताम् । अपराश्चोदकं शीतमिक्षुकाण्डरसोपमम् ॥१५॥

Commanded by the eminent sage in the following words :—"Let the army be brought hither !", Bharata forthwith caused the army to be duly brought (all the way to the hermitage) accordingly. (10) Entering the fire-sanctuary, sipping water (thrice according to the Śruti text त्रिराचामेत् with the recitation of the Divine Names for self-purification) and wiping the lips (twice according to the Vedic injunction द्विः परिमृज्य), the sage next invoked (in the following words) Viśwakarmā (the architect of gods) for providing hospitality (to the army of Prince Bharata) :—(11) "I invoke god Viśwakarmā, who is also the divine carpenter (Twaṣṭā). I wish to provide hospitality (to the army of Prince Bharata). Let everything be got ready in that connection for me. (12) I (further) invoke (the presence of) the three gods (Yama, Varuṇa and Kubera), who are the guardians of the spheres, headed by Indra (the ruler of gods). I wish to provide hospitality (to the army of Prince Bharata). Let everything be got ready for me towards that end. (13) Let all the rivers that flow in an easterly direction as well as those flowing in a westerly direction on (the surface of) the earth as also in the aerial region meet today (in this tract of land). (14) Let some (of those rivers) bear along Maireya (a kind of wine made from date palms etc.), others highly refined Surā (another species of wine made from jaggery, honey and flour), and (still) others cool water (delicious) like the juice of sugarcane. (15)

आह्वये देवगन्धर्वान् विश्वावसुहहाहुहून् । तथैवाप्सरसो देवगन्धर्वैश्चापि सर्वशः ॥१६॥
घृताचीमथ विश्वाचीं मिश्रकेशीमलम्बुषाम् । नागदत्तां च हेमां च सोमामद्रिकृतस्थलीम् ॥१७॥
शक्रं याश्चोपतिष्ठन्ति ब्रह्माणं याश्च भामिनीः । सर्वास्तुम्बुरुणा सार्धमाह्वये सपरिच्छदाः ॥१८॥
वनं कुरुषु यद् दिव्यं वासोभूषणपत्रवत् । दिव्यनारीफलं शश्वत् तत्कौबेरमिहैव तु ॥१९॥
इह मे भगवान् सोमो विधत्तामन्नमुत्तमम् । भक्ष्यं भोज्यं च चोष्यं च लेह्यं च विविधं बहु ॥२०॥
विचित्राणि च माल्यानि पादपप्रच्युतानि च । सुरादीनि च पेयानि मांसानि विविधानि च ॥२१॥

"I (also) invoke (the presence of) the celestial Gandharvas Viśwāvasu, Hāhā and Hūhū and even so all the celestial nymphs along with the other celestial Gandharvas. (16) I invoke the Apsarā named Ghṛtāchī and Viśwāchī, Miśrakeśī, Alambuṣā, Nāgadattā and Hemā as also Somā, who has taken up her abode on a mountain (called Mahendra) as well as all the nymphs that wait upon Indra (the ruler of paradise) as also the dancing girls that wait upon Brahmā (in Brahmaloka) along with (their teacher) Tumburu and (all) external appendage (such as musical instruments). (17-18) In the same way let that celestial grove (known by the name of Chaitraratha) presided over by Kubera (the guardian of the northern quarter) which is located in the land of the Uttara Kurus (in the north of India) and the trees of which are clothed with leaves in the form of (heavenly) raiment and jewels and perpetually bear fruits in the form of heavenly damsels, actually appear at this very spot. (19) Let the glorious moon-god (the diety presiding over the annual plants) place at my disposal abundant excellent food of every variety, consisting of dishes requiring mastication as well as those that can be gulped without mastication, nay those that can be sucked and those that require to be licked, and also lovely garlands dropped straight from trees, also drinks such as wine and meats of various kinds." (20-21)

एवं समाधिना युक्तस्तेजसाप्रतिमेन च । शिक्षास्वरसमायुक्तं सुव्रतश्चाब्रवीन्मुनिः ॥२२॥
मनसा ध्यायतस्तस्य प्राङ्मुखस्य कृताञ्जले । आजग्मुस्तानि सर्वाणि दैवतानि पृथक् पृथक् ॥२३॥
मलयं दर्दुरं चैव ततः स्वेदनुदोऽनिलः । उपस्पृश्य ववौ युक्त्या सुप्रियात्मा सुखं शिवः ॥२४॥
ततोऽभ्यवर्षन्त घना दिव्याः कुसुमवृष्टयः । देवदुन्दुभिघोषश्च दिक्षु सर्वासु शुश्रुवे ॥२५॥
प्रववुश्चोत्तमा वाता ननृतुश्चाप्सरोगणाः । प्रजगुर्देवगन्धर्वा वीणाः प्रमुमुचुः स्वरान् ॥२६॥
स शब्दो द्यां च भूमिं च प्राणिनां श्रवणानि च । विवेशोच्चावचः श्लक्ष्णः समो लयगुणान्वितः ॥२७॥

So did the sage of noble vows, who is rich in concentration of mind and endowed with matchless glory too, utter words of invocation pronounced according to the rules of phonetics and accented according to the rules of grammar. (22) (Even) as the sage invoked the aforesaid gods with his mind, sitting with his face turned towards the east, his palms joined together (in supplication), all those deities (that had been invoked by the sage) came one by one before him. (23) Thereupon a cool breeze, which was most delightful to the touch and which wiped one's sweat through (mere) contact blew gently touching the Malaya and Dardura mountains (clothed with forests of sandal wood trees). (24) Then fell down thick showers of heavenly flowers and the sound of celestial kettle-drums was heard in all the quarters. (25) Nay, excellent breezes began incessantly to blow and bevies of celestial nymphs began to dance. Heavenly Gandharvas beautifully sang and Vinas gave forth melodies. (26) That sound (of vocal and instrumental music),—which rose and fell (at intervals), was soft and of a moderate pitch and endowed with the virtue of a uniform measure of time,—penetrated into heaven, earth and the ears of living beings. (27)

तस्मिन्नेवंगते शब्दे दिव्ये श्रोत्रसुखे नृणाम् । ददर्श भारतं सैन्यं विधानं विश्वकर्मणः ॥२८॥
बभूव हि समा भूमिः समन्तात् पञ्चयोजनम् । शाद्वलैर्बहुभिश्छन्ना नीलवैदूर्यसंनिभैः ॥२९॥
तस्मिन् बिल्वाः कपित्थाश्च पनसा बीजपूरकाः । आमलक्यो बभूवुश्च चूताश्च फलभूषिताः ॥३०॥
उत्तरेभ्यः कुरुभ्यश्च वनं दिव्योपभोगवत् । आजगाम नदी सौम्या तीरजैर्बहुभिर्वृता ॥३१॥
चतुःशालानि शुभ्राणि शालाश्च गजवाजिनाम् । हर्म्यप्रासादसंयुक्ततोरणानि शुभानि च ॥३२॥
सितमेघनिभं चापि राजवेश्म सुतोरणम् । शुक्लमाल्यकृताकारं दिव्यगन्धसमुक्षितम् ॥३३॥
चतुरस्रमसम्बाधं शयनासनयानवत् । दिव्यैः सर्वरसैर्युक्तं दिव्यभोजनवस्त्रवत् ॥३४॥
उपकल्पितसर्वान्नं धौतनिर्मलभाजनम् । क्लृप्तसर्वासनं श्रीमत् स्वास्तीर्णशयनोत्तमम् ॥३५॥
प्रविवेश महाबाहुरनुज्ञातो महर्षिणा । वेश्म तद् रत्नसम्पूर्णं भरतः कैकयीसुतः ॥३६॥

While that heavenly melody, agreeable to the ears of men, came in that way, the army of Bharata beheld the handiwork of Viśwakarmā. (28) The (entire) stretch of land within a radius of forty miles not only turned even but was also carpeted with many patches of fresh grass resembling blue cat's-eye gems (in hue). (29) In that land sprang up Bel, Kapittha (*lit.*, on which monkeys dwell), Panasa (the bread-fruit), Bījapūraka (citron), Āmalakī (emblic myrobalan) and mango trees adorned with fruits. (30) Nay, from the territory of the Uttara Kurus came the grove (presided over by Kubera, the god of riches, and known by the name of Chaitraratha) rich in products worthy of being enjoyed by heavenly beings, as well as a delightful stream hemmed in with a number of trees growing on its banks. (31) There stood up white mansions (each) consisting of four rooms, as well as stables for elephants and horses and charming city-gates with mansions and palaces. (32) There also stood a royal palace, looking like a white cloud and provided with a lovely arched doorway, (nay) decorated with white garlands and sprinkled with exquisite scents. (33) It was quadrilateral (in shape), commodious, furnished with couches, seats and palanquins, supplied with all delicious drinks and provided with excellent food and clothing. (34) Victuals of every description had been kept ready there as well as cleaned vessels free from dirt. All kinds of seats had been arranged (at proper places) and the palace looked charming with superb couches duly covered (with counterpanes). (35) Permitted by the eminent sage (Bharadwāja), Prince Bharata, son of Kaikeyī, who was distinguished by (unusually) long arms, duly entered that palace richly stocked with precious stones. (36)

अनुजग्मुश्च ते सर्वे मन्त्रिणः सपुरोहिताः । बभूवुश्च मुदा युक्तास्तं दृष्ट्वा वेश्मसंविधिम् ॥३७॥
तत्र राजासनं दिव्यं व्यजनं छत्रमेव च । भरतो मन्त्रिभिः सार्धमभ्यवर्तत राजवत् ॥३८॥
आसनं पूजयामास रामायाभिप्रणम्य च । वालव्यजनमादाय न्यषीदत् सचिवासने ॥३९॥

आनुपूर्व्यान्निषेदुश्च सर्वे मन्त्रिपुरोहिताः । ततः सेनापतिः पश्चात् प्रशास्ता च न्यषीदत ॥४०॥
ततस्तत्र मुहूर्तेन नद्यः पायसकर्दमाः । उपातिष्ठन्त भरतं भरद्वाजस्य शासनात् ॥४१॥
आसामुभयतः कूलं पाण्डुमृत्तिकलेपनाः । रम्याश्चावसथा दिव्या ब्राह्मणस्य प्रसादजाः ॥४२॥
तेनैव च मुहूर्तेन दिव्याभरणभूषिताः । आगुर्विंशतिसाहस्रा ब्रह्मणा प्रहिताः स्त्रियः ॥४३॥
सुवर्णमणिमुक्तेन प्रवालेन च शोभिताः । आगुर्विंशतिसाहस्राः कुबेरप्रहिताः स्त्रियः ॥४४॥
याभिर्गृहीतः पुरुषः सोन्माद इव लक्ष्यते । आगुर्विंशतिसाहस्रा नन्दनादप्सरोगणाः ॥४५॥

All the aforesaid counsellors accompanied by family priests also followed suit and were filled with delight to see that excellent get-up of houses. (37) Along with the counsellors Bharata went clockwise round the excellent royal throne as well as round the whisk (made from the tail of a yak) and the (royal) umbrella kept there, as if round a sovereign. (38) Bowing down low to Śrī Rāma (as though the latter were seated on it), he paid homage to the throne (itself) and, taking the whisk, sat down on the seat meant for the chief minister. (39) All the counsellors and family priests too sat down in order of precedence. Then sat down the generalissimo and afterwards the officer in charge of the encampment. (40) Then after a short while streams having milk thickened with rice in place of mud flowed past Bharata on that site at the command of Bharadwāja. (41) On both the banks of these streams rose excellent and lovely houses plastered with lime and brought into being by the grace of the Brahman sage (Bharadwāja). (42) Nay, during that very hour arrived (there) twenty thousand women adorned with excellent jewels and sent by Brahmā (the creator). (43) There also came twenty thousand women decked with ornaments of gold, gems and pearls and coral and sent by Kubera. There (also) arrived from the Nandana grove (in paradise) twenty thousand celestial nymphs, embraced by whom a man looked as though seized with (a fit of) insanity*. (44-45)

नारदस्तुम्बुरुर्गोपः प्रभया सूर्यवर्चसः । एते गन्धर्वराजानो भरतस्याग्रतो जगुः ॥४६॥
अलम्बुषा मिश्रकेशी पुण्डरीकाथ वामना । उपानृत्यन्त भरतं भरद्वाजस्य शासनात् ॥४७॥
यानि माल्यानि देवेषु यानि चैत्ररथे वने । प्रयागे तान्यदृश्यन्त भरद्वाजस्य तेजसा ॥४८॥
बिल्वा मार्दङ्गिका आसञ् शम्याग्राहा बिभीतकाः । अश्वत्था नर्तकाश्चासन् भरद्वाजस्य तेजसा ॥४९॥
ततः सरलतालाश्च तिलकाः सतमालकाः । प्रहृष्टास्तत्र सम्पेतुः कुब्जा भूत्वाथ वामनाः ॥५०॥
शिंशपाऽऽमलकीजम्बूर्याश्चान्याः कानने लताः । प्रमदाविग्रहं कृत्वा भरद्वाजाश्रमेऽवसन् ॥५१॥
सुरां सुरापाः पिबत पायसं च बुभुक्षिताः । मांसानि च सुमेध्यानि भक्ष्यन्तां यो यदिच्छति ॥५२॥
उच्छोद्य स्नापयन्ति स्म नदीतीरेषु वल्गुषु । अप्येकमेकं पुरुषं प्रमदाः सप्त चाष्ट च ॥५३॥
संवाहन्त्यः समापेतुर्नार्यो विपुललोचनाः । परिमृज्य तदान्योन्यं पाययन्ति वराङ्गनाः ॥५४॥

The following chiefs of Gandharvas—Nārada, Tumburu and Gopa,—who shone like the sun because of their splendour, began to sing before Bharata. (46) Alambuṣā, Miśrakeśī, Puṇḍarīkā and Vāmanā started dancing in the presence of Bharata under orders of Bharadwāja. (47) Those (celestial) flowers which are found (solely) among gods and those which exist in the grove named Chaitraratha (belonging to Kubera, the god of riches) were seen at Prayag, thanks to the spiritual might of Bharadwāja. (48) Bel trees assumed the role of playing on clay tomtoms, Vibhītaka trees picked up a pair of cymbals known by the name of Śāmyā (in order to strike them so as to keep time) and Peepul trees played the role of dancers thanks to the spiritual might of Bharadwāja. (49) Then deodars, palmyra and Tilaka trees along with Tamāla trees arrived there highly rejoiced, assuming the forms of hunchbacks and dwarfs (to render services to Bharata). (50) Śiṃśapās (Aśoka trees), Āmalakīs (emblic myrobalan) and Jambūs (rose-apple trees) and whatever (other trees bearing female names and creepers there were in the forest took up their abode in the hermitage of Bharadwāja assuming the form of young women (in order to be able to serve Bharata). (51) (They said to the troops:) "Drink wine, O soldiers addicted to drinking, and drink milk thickened with rice, O troops stricken with hunger ! Let meats also eminently fit for sacrifice be eaten (as you will). One will get whatever he seeks." (52) (A batch of) seven or eight young women bathed every single man on the charming river-banks after (first) daubing his body with a fragrant paste of oil-seeds and (then) rubbing off the dirt. (53) There (also) appeared on the scene women with big eyes kneading the feet of men; (nay) wiping off the moisture (on their body) the lovely women gave them (delicious) beverages to drink in seclusion. (54)

---

* What has been stated above is corroborated by the following Śruti :—

गन्धर्वाप्सरसो वा एतमुन्मादयन्ति य उन्माद्यतीति ।

हयान् गजान् खरानुष्ट्रांस्तथैव सुरभेः सुतान् । अभोजयन् वाहनपास्तेषां भोज्यं यथाविधि ॥५५॥
इक्षूंश्च मधुलाजांश्च भोजयन्ति स्म वाहनान् । इक्ष्वाकुवरयोधानां चोदयन्तो महाबलाः ॥५६॥
नाश्वबन्धोऽश्वमाजानान्न गजं कुञ्जरग्रहः । मत्तप्रमत्तमुदिता सा चमूस्तत्र सम्बभौ ॥५७॥
तर्पिताः सर्वकामैश्च रक्तचन्दनरूषिताः । अप्सरोगणसंयुक्ताः सैन्या वाचमुदीरयन् ॥५८॥
नैवायोध्यां गमिष्यामो न गमिष्याम दण्डकान् । कुशलं भरतस्यास्तु रामस्यास्तु तथा सुखम् ॥५९॥
इति पादातयोधाश्च हस्त्यश्वारोहबन्धकाः । अनाथास्तं विधिं लब्ध्वा वाचमेतामुदीरयन् ॥६०॥
सम्प्रहृष्टा विनेदुस्ते नरास्तत्र सहस्रशः । भरतस्यानुयातारः स्वर्गोऽयमिति चाब्रुवन् ॥६१॥
नृत्यन्तश्च हसन्तश्च गायन्तश्चैव सैनिकाः । समन्तात् परिधावन्तो माल्योपेताः सहस्रशः ॥६२॥
ततो भुक्तवतां तेषां तदन्नममृतोपमम् । दिव्यानुद्वीक्ष्य भक्ष्यांस्तानभवद् भक्षणे मतिः ॥६३॥

The keepers (created and detailed by Bharadwāja) of the animals carrying Bharata's men on their backs duly fed the horses, elephants, donkeys, camels as well as the bullocks with articles fit for their consumption. (55) Coaxing the animals carrying the gallant warriors of Ikṣwāku's race on their back, the (aforesaid) very mighty keepers fed them with pieces of sugarcane as well as with fried grains of paddy soaked in honey. (56) The groom did not recognize the horse in his charge nor did the elephant-keeper recognize his charge (since the animals were fed and groomed so well that they were changed beyond recognition). The aforesaid army appeared intoxicated, maddened and enraptured on that spot. (57) Sated with all desired enjoyments and smeared with red sandal-paste, the troops, attended by hosts of celestial nymphs, uttered the following words:—(58) "We shall neither return to Ayodhya nor to the Daṇḍaka forest. Let all be well with Bharata (because of whom we are enjoying heavenly delights here on earth) and let (lasting) happiness be the lot of Śrī Rāma (as a foretaste of whose blessed sight we have secured these heavenly enjoyments) !" (59) So did the foot soldiers as well as those mounted on horses and elephants and their keepers (too), who (in their inebriety) considered themselves independent (*lit.*, without a master) on receiving such attentions (from the sage), utter the aforesaid words. (60) Extremely rejoiced (to see the untold affluence and power of the sage) those men on that spot who had followed Bharata (in his journey to Chitrakoot to bring Śrī Rāma back to Ayodhya) in their thousands thundered and said, "This is heaven (indeed)." (61) Adorned with garlands the troops in their thousands ran in every direction dancing and laughing and singing. (62) In spite of their having partaken of that ambrosia-like food their mind felt inclined to eat again the moment they saw those excellent dishes. (63)

प्रेष्याश्चेट्यश्च वध्वश्च बलस्थाश्चापि सर्वशः । बभूवुस्ते भृशं प्रीताः सर्वे चाहतवाससः ॥६४॥
कुञ्जराश्च खरोष्ट्राश्च गोऽश्वाश्च मृगपक्षिणः । बभूवुः सुभृतास्तत्र नातो ह्यन्यमकल्पयत् ॥६५॥
नाशुक्लवासास्तत्रासीत् क्षुधितो मलिनोऽपि वा । रजसा ध्वस्तकेशो वा नरः कश्चिददृश्यत ॥६६॥
आजैश्चापि च वाराहैर्निष्ठानवरसंचयैः । फलनिर्यूहसंसिद्धैः सूपैर्गन्धरसान्वितैः ॥६७॥
पुष्पध्वजवतीः पूर्णाः शुक्लस्यान्नस्य चाभितः । ददृशुर्विस्मितास्तत्र नरा लौहीः सहस्रशः ॥६८॥
बभूवुर्वनपार्श्वेषु कूपाः पायसकर्दमाः । ताश्च कामदुघा गावो द्रुमाश्चासन् मधुश्च्युतः ॥६९॥
वाप्यो मैरेयपूर्णाश्च मृष्टमांसचयैर्वृताः । प्रतप्तपिठरैश्चापि मार्गमायूरकौक्कुटैः ॥७०॥
पात्रीणां च सहस्राणि स्थालीनां नियुतानि च । न्यर्बुदानि च पात्राणि शातकुम्भमयानि च ॥७१॥
स्थाल्यः कुम्भ्यः करम्भ्यश्च दधिपूर्णाः सुसंस्कृताः । यौवनस्थस्य गौरस्य कपित्थस्य सुगन्धिनः ॥७२॥
ह्रदाः पूर्णा रसालस्य दध्नः श्वेतस्य चापरे । बभूवुः पायसस्यान्ये शर्कराणां च संचयाः ॥७३॥

Servants and maid-servants as also the wives of the troops as well as the troops (themselves)—they all felt highly delighted, nay, all were supplied with a new set of clothes. (64) Elephants and donkeys and camels too as well as bullocks and horses (nay, even) deer and birds in that region were fully nourished; hence they coveted nothing else. (65) No one in that area was clad in soiled attire, hungry or even untidy. Nor was any man seen with his hair covered with dust. (66) Struck with wonder people beheld there placed all round, in thousands, gold vessels decorated with floral flags and filled with excellent seasoned articles of food prepared from bulbs known by the name of Vārahī, flavoured with Ptychotis ajowan, and well boiled in the decoction of fruits; as well as with flavoursome boiled pulses and spotless white boiled rice. (67-68) The wells in the precincts of the forest (round the hermitage of Bharadwāja) had their mud transformed into milk thickened with rice and sugar; the cows in that region were transformed into cows of plenty and the trees dripped honey. (69) The bigger wells (with flights of stairs) got filled with Maireya (a kind of intoxicating drink) and were banked with heaps of dainty meat of deer, peacocks and fowls dressed in intensely heated earthen vessels (for the use of Niṣādas and other low-caste people in the army of Bharata). (70) Thousands of gold vessels containing boiled rice, lakhs of gold cauldrons holding seasoned articles of food and thousands of millions of plates, (also) made of gold were to be seen (there). (71) There appeared clay pans, smaller earthen vessels and big broad-mouthed clay vessels full of curds duly spiced (with dry ginger etc.) and tanks full of fragrant buttermilk tinged yellow (with saffron) and prepared a few hours back, as well as of buttermilk flavoured with cumin seeds, others full of white curds and still others of milk, as also heaps of sugar. (72-73)

कल्कांश्चूर्णकषायांश्च स्नानानि विविधानि च । ददृशुर्भाजनस्थानि तीर्थेषु सरितां नराः ॥७४॥
शुक्लानंशुमतश्चापि दन्तधावनसंचयान् । शुक्लांश्चन्दनकल्कांश्च समुद्गेष्ववतिष्ठतः ॥७५॥
दर्पणान् परिमृष्टांश्च वाससां चापि संचयान् । पादुकोपानहं चैव युग्मान्यत्र सहस्रशः ॥७६॥
आञ्जनीः कङ्कतान् कूर्चांश्छत्राणि च धनूंषि च । मर्मत्राणानि चित्राणि शयनान्यासनानि च ॥७७॥
प्रतिपानहृदान् पूर्णान् खरोष्ट्रगजवाजिनाम् ।
अवगाह्य सुतीर्थांश्च हृदान् सोत्पलपुष्करान् । आकाशवर्णप्रतिमान् स्वच्छतोयान् सुखाप्लवान् ॥७८॥
नीलवैदूर्यवर्णांश्च मृदून् यवससंचयान् । निर्वापार्थं पशूनां ते ददृशुस्तत्र सर्वशः ॥७९॥
व्यस्मयन्त मनुष्यास्ते स्वप्नकल्पं तदद्भुतम् । दृष्ट्वाऽऽतिथ्यं कृतं तावद् भरतस्य महर्षिणा ॥८०॥
इत्येवं रममाणानां देवानामिव नन्दने । भरद्वाजाश्रमे रम्ये सा रात्रिर्व्यत्यवर्तत ॥८१॥
प्रतिजग्मुश्च ता नद्यो गन्धर्वाश्च यथागतम् । भरद्वाजमनुज्ञाप्य ताश्च सर्वा वराङ्गनाः ॥८२॥
तथैव मत्ता मदिरोत्कटा नरास्तथैव दिव्यागुरुचन्दनोक्षिताः ।
तथैव दिव्या विविधाः स्रगुत्तमाः पृथग्विकीर्णा मनुजैः प्रमर्दिताः ॥८३॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकनवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ९१ ॥

On the stairs for descent to the rivers people saw kept in large pans crushed emblic myrobalans and powdered fragrant substances and varied articles (such as oils, hot water etc.) useful for a bath. (74) They (further) beheld at every place in that area bundles of fresh white twigs with their one end crushed for being used as a tooth-brush, as well as the paste of white sandalwood (for being used as a shampoo) kept in round covered wooden cases, perfectly cleaned mirrors as well as piles of textiles, as also thousands of pairs of wooden sandals and (leather) shoes, small caskets containing collyrium, combs, brushes for combing moustaches and beards, nay, umbrellas, and bows, armour and different kinds of beds and seats, tanks full of water worth drinking after feed for donkeys, camels, elephants and horses, as well as tanks, provided with excellent descents, where one could easily take a plunge, full of lilies and lotuses, resembling the sky in hue, containing limpid water and pleasing to bathe in and heaps of tender grass resembling the blue cat's-eyes gem in hue for the consumption of animals. (75-79) The aforesaid men were amazed to see that entertainment, wonderful like a dream, provided so long for Bharata by the eminent sage Bharadwāja. (80) While the people (that had followed Bharata in his journey to Chitrakoot) were (still) busy enjoying as aforesaid in that lovely hermitage of Bharadwāja the delights (provided by the sage) like (so many) gods in the Nandana grove (in paradise), that night passed away. (81) Taking leave of Bharadwāja, those rivers as well as the Gandharvas (celestial musicians) and all the lovely women (*viz*, the celestial nymphs) returned (even) as they had come. (82) The people (however) remained flushed and drunk with wine much in the same way (even at dawn); they stood smeared with the exquisite paste of aloe wood and sandalwood even as before; and the excellent celestial garlands of various kinds lay strewn here and there separately as fresh as at the beginning, crushed as they were by men (through constant use for the whole night). (83)

Thus ends Canto Ninety-one in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्विनवतितमः सर्गः

Canto XCII

Questioned with joined palms about the road to Chitrakoot, Bharadwaja shows the way to Bharata and then inquires of him about the names of his three mothers, who stood bowing down to the sage. Having told him the names of all the three of his mothers with the history of each, and commanding the army to get ready for the journey ahead, Bharata proceeds to Chitrakoot with his retinue.

ततस्तां रजनीं व्युष्य भरतः सपरिच्छदः । कृतातिथ्यो भरद्वाजं कामादभिजगाम ह ॥ १ ॥
तमृषिः पुरुषव्याघ्रं प्रेक्ष्य प्राञ्जलिमागतम् । हुताग्निहोत्रो भरतं भरद्वाजोऽभ्यभाषत ॥ २ ॥
कच्चिदत्र सुखा रात्रिस्तवास्मद्विषये गता । समग्रस्ते जनः कच्चिदातिथ्ये शंस मेऽनघ ॥ ३ ॥
तमुवाचाञ्जलिं कृत्वा भरतोऽभिप्रणम्य च । आश्रमादुपनिष्क्रान्तमृषिमुत्तमतेजसम् ॥ ४ ॥
सुखोषितोऽस्मि भगवन् समग्रबलवाहनः । बलवत्तर्पितश्चाहं बलवान् भगवंस्त्वया ॥ ५ ॥
अपेतक्लमसंतापाः सुभिक्षाः सुप्रतिश्रयाः । अपि प्रेष्यानुपादाय सर्वे स्म सुसुखोषिताः ॥ ६ ॥
आमन्त्रयेऽहं भगवन् कामं त्वामृषिसत्तम । समीपं प्रस्थितं भ्रातुर्मैत्रेणेक्षस्व चक्षुषा ॥ ७ ॥
आश्रमं तस्य धर्मज्ञ धार्मिकस्य महात्मनः । आचक्ष्व कतमो मार्गः कियानिति च शंस मे ॥ ८ ॥
इति पृष्टस्तु भरतं भ्रातुर्दर्शनलालसम् । प्रत्युवाच महातेजा भरद्वाजो महातपाः ॥ ९ ॥

Having spent the previous night with his family (at the hermitage of Bharadwāja), Bharata, to whom hospitality had been extended (by the sage), approached Bharadwāja from an interested motive (to take leave of him to proceed to Chitrakoot): so the tradition goes. (1) Perceiving that tiger among men arrived with joined palms, and having poured oblations into the sacred fire, Sage Bharadwāja spoke to Bharata (as follows):—(2) "Tell me, O sinless one, was your night happily spent here in this hermitage of ours? Were all your men fully gratified with the hospitality (shown to them)?" (3) Joining his palms and bowing down low before him, Bharata replied (as follows) to the sage, who was invested with the highest glory, and had come out of the hermitage to meet him:—(4) "I spent the night comfortably with my entire army and all my animals. And I with my army was fully sated by you, O venerable sir. (5) Including even servants we have all spent our time most happily, relieved of our fatigue and discomfort, richly supplied with food and drink and lodged in excellent houses. (6) I fervently entreat you, O venerable sir: (pray) regard me, set out towards the presence of my (elder) brother, with a benign look, O jewel among sages! (7) Tell me the location of the hermitage of that pious and high-souled prince, O knower of what is right, and (also) let me know which route leads to it and how long it is." (8) Questioned thus, Bharadwāja, for his part, who is endowed with exceptional glory and noted for his great asceticism, replied (as follows) to Bharata, who was eager to secure the blessed sight of his (elder) brother:—(9)

भरतार्धतृतीयेषु योजनेष्वजने वने । चित्रकूटगिरिस्तत्र रम्यनिर्दरकाननः ॥१०॥
उत्तरं पार्श्वमासाद्य तस्य मन्दाकिनी नदी । पुष्पितद्रुमसंछन्ना रम्यपुष्पितकानना ॥११॥
अनन्तरं तत्सरितश्चित्रकूटं च पर्वतम् । तयोः पर्णकुटीं तात तत्र तौ वसतो ध्रुवम् ॥१२॥
दक्षिणेन च मार्गेण सव्यदक्षिणमेव च । गजवाजिसमाकीर्णां वाहिनीं वाहिनीपते ॥१३॥
वाहयस्व महाभाग ततो द्रक्ष्यसि राघवम् । प्रयाणमिति च श्रुत्वा राजराजस्य योषितः ॥१४॥
हित्वा यानानि यानार्हा ब्राह्मणं पर्यवारयन् । वेपमाना कृशा दीना सह देव्या सुमित्रया ॥१५॥
कौसल्या तत्र जग्राह कराभ्यां चरणौ मुनेः । असमृद्धेन कामेन सर्वलोकस्य गर्हिता ॥१६॥
कैकेयी तत्र जग्राह चरणौ सव्यपत्रपा । तं प्रदक्षिणमागम्य भगवन्तं महामुनिम् ॥१७॥
अदूराद् भरतस्यैव तस्थौ दीनमनास्तदा । तत्र पप्रच्छ भरतं भरद्वाजो महामुनिः ॥१८॥
विशेषं ज्ञातुमिच्छामि मातृणां तव राघव ।

"At a distance of two and a half Yojanas* or twenty miles (from here) in the midst of a forest uninhabited by men (other than ascetics) there stands a well-known (mountain) named Chitrakoot abounding in lovely caves and groves. (10) Touching its northern side flows the river Mandākinī, shaded by trees in blossom and hemmed with lovely groves laden with flowers. (11) Not far from that river and adjacent to the Chitrakoot hill you will find the hut of the two brothers, made of leafy twigs; the two brothers undoubtedly dwell in that hut. (12) Leaving by the southern route (proceeding along the southern bank of the Yamuna) take the army full of elephants and horses along the bye-path turning to the left and proceeding southward, O lord of the army! Proceeding along that route you will (be able to) behold Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), O highly fortunate prince!" Nay, hearing the talk (going on) about the journey (to Chitrakoot), the consorts of the (deceased) emperor (Kausalyā and others) stood encircling the Brahman (Bharadwāja), leaving their chariots, even though they deserved to remain in their vehicles (because of their sex, old age and high rank). Of them Kausalyā,—who was quaking (through old age and emotion), was emaciated (through grief caused by the loss of her husband) and afflicted (because of her separation from Śrī Rāma),—while Queen Sumitrā clasped the sage's feet with both her hands. Kaikeyī (too),—who was condemned by the whole world because of her ambition (to see her son appointed as Prince Regent of Ayodhya) having not been fulfilled, clasped the sage's feet with bashfulness (because of her having brought about the banishment of Śrī Rāma). Having gone round that venerable and eminent sage clockwise, she stood close to Bharata himself, sad at heart (because of her designs having been frustrated) on that occasion. At that time the eminent sage Bharadwāja spoke to Bharata as follows:—(13–18) "I seek to know the particulars concerning your mothers, O scion of Raghu!"

---

* It has already been pointed out in a footnote below the translation of II. liv. 28 on p. 441 of Vālmiki-Rāmāyaṇa Number—III that by trebling the figure mentioned in the text according to the rules governing the compound Ekaśeṣa Dwandva or according to what is known as the Kapiñjalādhikaraṇa-Nyāya in the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā Philosophy the learned author of the commentary known by the name of "Rāmāyaṇa-Śiromaṇi" takes the figure of two and half Yojanas or ten Kosas to mean thirty Kosas or sixty miles, and making allowance for the difference in the standards of measurement obtaining in those days the distance of Chitrakoot from Prayag works out to be approximately the same as it is now calculated, to be, *viz.*, eighty miles.

एवमुक्तस्तु भरतो भरद्वाजेन धार्मिकः ॥१९॥
उवाच प्राञ्जलिर्भूत्वा वाक्यं वचनकोविदः । यामिमां भगवन् दीनां शोकानशनकर्शिताम् ॥२०॥
पितुर्हि महिषीं देवीं देवतामिव पश्यसि । एषा तं पुरुषव्याघ्रं सिंहविक्रान्तगामिनम् ॥२१॥
कौसल्या सुषुवे रामं धातारमदितिर्यथा । अस्या वामभुजं श्लिष्टा या सा तिष्ठति दुर्मनाः ॥२२॥
इयं सुमित्रा दुःखार्ता देवी राज्ञश्च मध्यमा । कर्णिकारस्य शाखेव शीर्णपुष्पा वनान्तरे ॥२३॥
एतस्यास्तौ सुतौ देव्याः कुमारौ देववर्णिनौ । उभौ लक्ष्मणशत्रुघ्नौ वीरौ सत्यपराक्रमौ ॥२४॥
यस्याः कृते नरव्याघ्रौ जीवनाशमितो गतौ । राजा पुत्रविहीनश्च स्वर्गं दशरथो गतः ॥२५॥
क्रोधनामकृतप्रज्ञां दृप्तां सुभगमानिनीम् । ऐश्वर्यकामां कैकेयीमनार्यामार्यरूपिणीम् ॥२६॥
ममैतां मातरं विद्धि नृशंसां पापनिश्चयाम् । यतोमूलं हि पश्यामि व्यसनं महदात्मनः ॥२७॥

Addressed thus by Bharadwāja, the pious Bharata, for his part, who was a master of expression, made the following answer with joined palms:—"This godlike Queen Kausalyā, the seniormost consort of my father, whom indeed you see here afflicted and emaciated through fasting on account of grief, O venerable sir, brought forth that tiger among men, Śrī Rāma,—who takes gallant strides like a lion,—(even) as Aditi (the mother of gods) gave birth to Upendra (Lord Vāmana, so-called because he was a younger brother to Indra). Here is the celebrated Sumitrā, the middle queen of the king, stricken with agony, who stands disconsolate at heart clinging to the left arm of Kausalyā and looking like a branch of Karṇikāra tree with withered flowers standing in the interior of a grove. (19—23) Both Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna, those two heroic princes of godlike appearance and unfailing prowess, are the sons of this godly lady. (24) Know this irate, vain, vulgar, though noble to all appearance, and cruel Kaikey, my mother of uncultured mind and sinful resolve, who esteems herself good-looking and is covetous of power, (nay) thanks to whose designs, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, (the two tigers among men) have reached here the end of their life (in the form of exile in the forest, which is fraught with dangers at every step) while King Daśaratha, having been deprived of his (two) sons (Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) has ascended to heaven, and whom I consider to be the root cause of the great adversity that has befallen me." (25—57)

इत्युक्त्वा नरशार्दूलो बाष्पगद्गदया गिरा । विनिश्वास स ताम्राक्षः क्रुद्धो नाग इव श्वसन् ॥२८॥
भरद्वाजो महर्षिस्तं ब्रुवन्तं भरतं तथा । प्रत्युवाच महाबुद्धिरिदं वचनमर्थवित् ॥२९॥
न दोषेणावगन्तव्या कैकेयी भरत त्वया । रामप्रव्राजनं ह्येतत् सुखोदर्कं भविष्यति ॥३०॥
देवानां दानवानां च ऋषीणां भावितात्मनाम् । हितमेव भविष्यद्धि रामप्रव्राजनादिह ॥३१॥

Having uttered these words in a voice choked with tears and his eyes reddened (through anger mixed with grief), that tiger among men began to draw a deep audible breath like a cobra hissing in wrath. (28) To the said Bharata, who was speaking thus, Bharadwāja, the eminent sage, who was gifted with great intelligence and who knew everything, made the following answer:—(29) "Kaikeyī, O Bharata, should not be regarded by you as guilty; for this banishment of Śrī Rāma will result in happiness (to all). (30) In fact, good alone in this universe will result from the exile of Śrī Rāma to gods, demons and Ṛṣis who contemplate on the (Supreme) Self." (81)

अभिवाद्य तु संसिद्धः कृत्वा चैनं प्रदक्षिणम् । आमन्त्र्य भरतः सैन्यं युज्यतामिति चाब्रवीत् ॥३२॥
ततो वाजिरथान् युक्त्वा दिव्यान् हेमविभूषितान् । अध्यारोहत् प्रयाणार्थं बहून् बहुविधो जनः ॥३३॥
गजकन्या गजाश्चैव हेमकक्ष्याः पताकिनः । जीमूता इव घर्मान्ते सघोषाः सम्प्रतस्थिरे ॥३४॥
विविधान्यपि यानानि महान्ति च लघूनि च । प्रययुः सुमहार्हाणि पादैरपि पदातयः ॥३५॥
अथ यानप्रवेकैस्तु कौसल्यांप्रमुखाः स्त्रियः । रामदर्शनकाङ्क्षिण्यः प्रययुर्मुदितास्तदा ॥३६॥
चन्द्रार्कतरुणाभासां नियुक्तां शिबिकां शुभाम् । आस्थाय प्रययौ श्रीमान् भरतः सपरिच्छदः ॥३७॥
सा प्रयाता महासेना गजवाजिसमाकुला । दक्षिणां दिशमावृत्य महामेघ इवोत्थितः ॥३८॥
वनानि च व्यतिक्रम्य जुष्टानि मृगपक्षिभिः । गङ्गायाः परवेलायां गिरिष्वथ नदीष्वपि ॥३९॥
सा सम्प्रहृष्टद्विपवाजियूथा वित्रासयन्ती मृगपक्षिसंघान् ।
महद्वनं तत् प्रविगाहमाना रराज सेना भरतस्य तत्र ॥४०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्विनवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ९२ ॥

Greeting the sage and going round him clockwise, and taking leave of him, Bharata, for his part, who had achieved his object (by coming to know the whereabouts of Śrī Rāma and receiving the benedictions of the sage) commanded the army in the following words:—"Let preparations be made (for the journey)." (32) Then, having joined the horses to their many excellent chariots embellished with gold, the different kinds of people ascended them for the march. (33) She-elephants and male elephants provided with girths of gold and flags marched in a body, distinguished by the sound of bells, like thundering clouds at the close of summer. (34) People drove in various highly precious conveyances, big as well as small; while those travelling on foot proceeded on foot. (35) Then departed full of joy in excellent vehicles ladies headed by Kausalyā, desirous as they were of seeing Śrī Rāma at that moment. (36) Ascending a lovely palanquin possessing the splendour of the midday sun and the full moon and borne by (four) men, proceeded the glorious Bharata with the outfit for travelling. (37) Full of elephants and horses, that huge army on its march looked like a vast cloud burst upon the view, enveloping the southern quarter. (38) Traversing woodlands inhabited by deer and birds and hemming mountains as well as rivers beyond the western bank of the Ganga (flowing in a southerly direction) the army moved along. (39) Striking the hosts of deer and birds (inhabiting that region) with terror while penetrating through that extensive forest (in the precincts of Chitrakoot), the said army of Bharata, consisting as it did of overjoyed elephants and horses, looked charming on that spot. (40)

Thus ends Canto Ninety-two in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रिनवतितमः सर्गः

Canto XCIII

Setting his foot on the soil of Chitrakoot with his army and camp-followers, and identifying the place with the help of the features pointed out by Bharadwāja, Bharata commands the army men to look out for the hermitage of Śrī Rāma. Pursuing their search they perceive smoke at some distance and concluding the site to be the hermitage of Śrī Rāma, Bharata enjoins his army to halt and makes up his mind to walk with Vasiṣṭha and others to that place.

तया महत्या यायिन्या ध्वजिन्या वनवासिनः । अर्दिता यूथपा मत्ताः सयूथाः सम्प्रदुद्रुवुः ॥ १ ॥
ऋक्षाः पृषतमुख्याश्च रुरवश्च समन्ततः । दृश्यन्ते वनवाटेषु गिरिष्वपि नदीषु च ॥ २ ॥
स सम्प्रतस्थे धर्मात्मा प्रीतो दशरथात्मजः । वृतो महत्या नादिन्या सेनया चतुरङ्गया ॥ ३ ॥
सागरौघनिभा सेना भरतस्य महात्मनः । महीं संछादयामास प्रावृषि द्यामिवाम्बुदः ॥ ४ ॥
तुरंगौघैरवतता वारणैश्च महाबलैः । अनालक्ष्या चिरं कालं तस्मिन् काले बभूव सा ॥ ५ ॥
स गत्वा दूरमध्वानं सम्परिश्रान्तवाहनः । उवाच वचनं श्रीमान् वसिष्ठं मन्त्रिणां वरम् ॥ ६ ॥
यादृशं लक्ष्यते रूपं यथा चैव मया श्रुतम् । व्यक्तं प्राप्ताः स्म तं देशं भरद्वाजो यमब्रवीत् ॥ ७ ॥
अयं गिरिश्चित्रकूटस्तथा मन्दाकिनी नदी । एतत् प्रकाशते दूरान्नीलमेघनिभं वनम् ॥ ८ ॥
गिरेः सानूनि रम्याणि चित्रकूटस्य सम्प्रति । वारणैरवमृद्यन्ते मामकैः पर्वतोपमैः ॥ ९ ॥
मुञ्चन्ति कुसुमान्येते नगाः पर्वतसानुषु । नीला इवातपापाये तोयं तोयधरा घनाः ॥१०॥

Hard pressed by that huge moving army, the leaders of herds (of wild elephants and so on) in rut ran away helter-skelter along with their herds. (1) Bears, the leaders of spotted deer as well as the deer without spots known by the name of Rurus, were seen (running) everywhere on the tracks of the forest, on mountains as well as along river banks. (2) Followed by a huge army consisting of four limbs (*viz*, chariots, horsemen, elephants and foot soldiers) and full of noise (caused by the rattling of chariot wheels, the neighing of horses and the trumpeting of elephants) Bharata (son of Daśaratha), whose mind was given to piety, delightfully proceeded along with others (in the hope of meeting Śrī Rāma). (3) The army of the high-souled Bharata, which resembled the high-tide of an ocean, overran the land (even) as a cloud overspreads the sky during the monsoon. (4) Covered all over by hosts of horses and very mighty elephants, the ground at that time became invisible for a long period. (5) Having covered a long distance, the glorious Bharata, whose animals were (now) fully exhausted, submitted as follows to Vasiṣṭha, the foremost of his counsellors:—(6) "From the topography of this region as it is observed by us as well as from what has been heard by me about it, it is clear that we have reached that area of which Sage Bharadwāja spoke (to us). (7) Here is the Chitrakoot hill and there is the river Mandākinī. (And) here comes into view the forest looking like a blue cloud from a distance. (8) The lovely peaks of the Chitrakoot mountain are being trampled at present by my elephants resembling (so many) hills. (9) (Shaken by the elephants) the yonder trees shed flowers on the hill-tops (even) as dark rain-bearing clouds pour water at the end of summer." (10)

किंनराचरितं देशं पश्य शत्रुघ्न पर्वते । हयैः समन्तादाकीर्णं मकरैरिव सागरम् ॥११॥
एते मृगगणा भान्ति शीघ्रवेगाः प्रचोदिताः । वायुप्रविद्धाः शरदि मेघजाला इवाम्बरे ॥१२॥
कुर्वन्ति कुसुमापीडाञ्शिरस्सु सुरभीनमी । मेघप्रकाशैः फलकैर्दाक्षिणात्या नरा यथा ॥१३॥
निष्कूजमिव भूत्वेदं वनं घोरप्रदर्शनम् । अयोध्येव जनाकीर्णा सम्प्रति प्रतिभाति मे ॥१४॥
खुरैरुदीरितो रेणुर्दिवं प्रच्छाद्य तिष्ठति । तं वहत्यनिलः शीघ्रं कुर्वन्निव मम प्रियम् ॥१५॥
स्यन्दनांस्तुरगोपेतान् सूतमुख्यैरधिष्ठितान् । एतान् सम्पततः शीघ्रं पश्य शत्रुघ्न कानने ॥१६॥
एतान् वित्रासितान् पश्य बर्हिणः प्रियदर्शनान् । एवमापततः शैलमधिवासं पतत्त्रिणाम् ॥१७॥
अतिमात्रमयं देशो मनोज्ञः प्रतिभाति मे । तापसानां निवासोऽयं व्यक्तं स्वर्गपथोऽनघ ॥१८॥
मृगा मृगीभिः सहिता बहवः पृषता वने । मनोज्ञरूपा लक्ष्यन्ते कुसुमैरिव चित्रिताः ॥१९॥
साधु सैन्याः प्रतिष्ठन्तां विचिन्वन्तु च काननम् । यथा तौ पुरुषव्याघ्रौ दृश्येते रामलक्ष्मणौ ॥२०॥

(Turning to Śatrughna, Bharata continued:—) "Behold, O Śatrughna, the region on the (upper) part of the mountain, frequented (till now) by Kinnaras, (now) overrun on all sides by horses (even) as a sea is infested by alligators. (11) Running with quick speed as urged forward (by the troops), these herds of deer look charming like masses of clouds sailing in the sky when driven by the wind in autumn. (12) Like men of the south these troops distinguished by shields resembling clouds (in hue) wear fragrant floral ornaments on their heads. (13) Getting crowded with men, this forest, which was noiseless and wore a terrifying look till now, now appears to me like Ayodhya. (14) The dust raised by the hoofs (of the horses and other animals) hangs over the sky. The wind blows it away quickly as though doing a kindly act to me (by making the landscape visible to me). (15) Behold, these chariots, drawn by horses and controlled by the best of charioteers, advancing rapidly through the forest (eager as their occupants are to see Śrī Rāma), O Śatrughna ! (16) Behold these peacocks,—which are (so) delightful to look at and are greatly frightened (by the sight of the army),—hastening thus towards the mountain, the abode of birds. (17) This region appears most enchanting to me. This home of ascetics is clearly a road to heaven, O sinless one ! (18) Many spotted deer accompanied by their hinds and endowed with enchanting forms appear as though decorated with flowers. (19) Let troops go forward in an unobtrusive manner and examine the forest, so that those two tigers among men, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, may be found out." (20)

भरतस्य वचः श्रुत्वा पुरुषाः शस्त्रपाणयः । विविशुस्तद्वनं शूरा धूमाग्रं ददृशुस्ततः ॥२१॥
ते समालोक्य धूमाग्रमूचुर्भरतमागताः । नामनुष्ये भवत्यग्निर्व्यक्तमत्रैव राघवौ ॥२२॥
अथ नात्र नरव्याघ्रौ राजपुत्रौ परंतपौ । अन्ये रामोपमाः सन्ति व्यक्तमत्र तपस्विनः ॥२३॥

तच्छ्रुत्वा भरतस्तेषां वचनं साधुसम्मतम् । सैन्यानुवाच सर्वांस्तानमित्रबलमर्दनः ॥२४॥
यत्ता भवन्तस्तिष्ठन्तु नेतो गन्तव्यमग्रतः । अहमेव गमिष्यामि सुमन्त्रो धृतिरेव च ॥२५॥
एवमुक्तास्ततः सैन्यास्तत्र तस्थुः समन्ततः । भरतो यत्र धूमाग्रं तत्र दृष्टिं समादधत् ॥२६॥
व्यवस्थिता या भरतेन सा चमूर्निरीक्षमाणापि च भूमिमग्रतः ।
बभूव हृष्टा नचिरेण जानती प्रियस्य रामस्य समागमं तदा ॥२७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्रिनवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ९३ ॥

Hearing Bharata's command, gallant troops with arms in their hands entered that forest and presently saw a column of smoke (rising at some distance). (21) Clearly perceiving a column of smoke they approached Bharata and submitted, "There can be no fire in a place uninhabited by human beings. Evidently Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Raghu) dwell on this very spot. (22) If the two princes, who are (veritable) tigers among men and the scorchers of their enemy, are not here, obviously there are other ascetics like Śrī Rāma on this spot." (23) Hearing the aforesaid submission of the soldiers, which was esteemed (even) by pious men, Bharata, who was capable of crushing a hostile army, spoke to all those troops (as follows):—(24) "Let you remain vigilant (where you are); you should not proceed farther than this place. I shall go myself (to meet Śrī Rāma), as also Sumantra and Dhṛti (two trusted ministers of King Daśaratha)." (25) Commanded thus (by Bharata), the troops thereupon remained stationed all round on that (very) spot; while Bharata fixed his gaze on the spot where a column of smoke was visible. (26) Even though perceiving the place (where Śrī Rāma was supposed to be) ahead, the aforesaid army, which was help up (on that spot) by Bharata, felt rejoiced (even) then anticipating (as they did) their meeting with their beloved Rāma at no distant hour. (27)

Thus ends Canto Ninety-three in the Ayodhya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुर्नवतितमः सर्गः

Canto XCIV

Diverting his own mind and seeking to please Sītā, Śrī Rāma gives a graphic description of Chitrakoot, stressing the special features.

दीर्घकालोषितस्तस्मिन् गिरौ गिरिवरप्रियः । वैदेह्याः प्रियमाकाङ्क्षन् स्वं च चित्तं विलोभयन्॥ १ ॥
अथ दाशरथिश्चित्रं चित्रकूटमदर्शयत् । भार्याममरसंकाशः शचीमिव पुरंदरः ॥ २ ॥
न राज्यभ्रंशनं भद्रे न सुहृद्भिर्विनाभवः । मनो मे बाधते दृष्ट्वा रमणीयमिमं गिरिम् ॥ ३ ॥
पश्येममचलं भद्रे नानाद्विजगणायुतम् । शिखरैः खमिवोद्विद्धैर्धातुमद्भिर्विभूषितम् ॥ ४ ॥
केचिद् रजतसंकाशाः केचित् क्षतजसंनिभाः । पीतमाञ्जिष्ठवर्णाश्च केचिन्मणिवरप्रभाः ॥ ५ ॥
पुष्पार्ककेतकाभाश्च केचिज्ज्योतीरसप्रभाः । विराजन्तेऽचलेन्द्रस्य देशा धातुविभूषिताः ॥ ६ ॥
नानामृगगणैर्द्वीपितरक्ष्वृक्षगणैर्वृतः । अदुष्टैर्भात्ययं शैलो बहुपक्षिसमाकुलः ॥ ७ ॥

आम्रजम्ब्वसनैर्लोध्रैः प्रियालैः पनसैर्धवैः । अङ्कोलैर्भव्यतिनिशैर्बिल्वतिन्दुकवेणुभिः ॥ ८ ॥
काश्मर्यारिष्टवरणैर्मधूकैस्तिलकैरपि । बदर्यामलकैर्नीपैर्वेत्रधन्वनबीजकैः ॥ ९ ॥
पुष्पवद्भिः फलोपेतैश्छायावद्भिर्मनोरमैः । एवमादिभिराकीर्णः श्रियं पुष्यत्ययं गिरिः ॥१०॥

Seeking to please Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory) and diverting his own mind, Śrī Rāma (son of Daśaratha), who was fond of excellent mountains and had (now) lived on that mountain (Chitrakoot) for a long time (covering a period of about three months), (nay) who shone brightly as a god, showed to his spouse (the beauties of) the wonderful Chitrakoot (deservedly so called, consisting as it did of many wonders), and Indra (the destroyer of strongholds) would show (the beauties of) the Nandana grove to Śachī (his consort):—(1-2) "On seeing this delightful hill neither loss of sovereignty nor separation from my near and dear ones vexes my mind, O good lady! (3) Behold this mountain, inhabited by flocks of birds of every description, and adorned with peaks rich in minerals, that stand piercing the skies as it were, O blessed one! (4) Adorned with minerals, parts of this king of mountains shine brightly, some glittering like silver, some blood-red, some yellowish, some red as madder, some sparkling like the foremost of gems, some possessing the lustre of topaz and crystal and the hue of the Ketaka flower and others shining like stars and mercury. (5-6) Teeming with herds of deer of every description and hosts of harmless tigers, leopards and bears, and crowded with numerous birds, this mountain looks charming. (7) Abounding in umbrageous trees laden with flowers and fruits and pleasing to the mind, the foremost of which are mangoes, rose-apples and Asanas, Lodhras, Priyālas (commonly called Payals), bread-fruit trees, Dhavas, Ankolas, Bhavyas and Tiniśas, Bilvas (Bel trees), Tindukas and bamboos, Kāśmarīs, margosas and Varaṇas, Madhūkas and Tilakas, jujube trees and trees bearing emblic myrobalans, Kadambas, cane, Dhanvanas and pomegranates (called Bījaka because they abound in seeds), this mountain is enhancing its own beauty. (8—10)

शैलप्रस्थेषु रम्येषु पश्येमान् कामहर्षणान् । किंनरान् द्वन्द्वशो भद्रे रममाणान् मनस्विनः ॥११॥
शाखावसक्तान् खड्गांश्च प्रवराण्यम्बराणि च । पश्य विद्याधरस्त्रीणां क्रीडोद्देशान् मनोरमान् ॥१२॥
जलप्रपातैरुद्भेदैर्निष्यन्दैश्च क्वचित् क्वचित् । स्रवद्भिर्भात्ययं शैलः स्रवन्मद इव द्विपः ॥१३॥
गुहासमीरणो गन्धान् नानापुष्पभवान् बहून् । घ्राणतर्पणमभ्येत्य कं नरं न प्रहर्षयेत् ॥१४॥
यदीह शरदोऽनेकास्त्वया सार्धमनिन्दिते । लक्ष्मणेन च वत्स्यामि न मां शोकः प्रधर्षति ॥१५॥
बहुपुष्पफले रम्ये नानाद्विजगणायुते । विचित्रशिखरे ह्यस्मिन् रतवानस्मि भामिनि ॥१६॥
अनेन वनवासेन मम प्राप्तं फलद्वयम् । पितुश्चानृण्यता धर्मे भरतस्य प्रियं तथा ॥१७॥
वैदेहि रमसे कच्चिच्चित्रकूटे मया सह । पश्यन्ती विविधान् भावान् मनोवाक्कायसम्मतान् ॥१८॥

"Behold these Kinnaras rejoicing at will and sporting in couples on the level grounds on (the tops of) this mountain with their minds focussed on each other. (11) Also behold suspended on the boughs (of trees) the swords (of the Kinnaras) as also the excellent garments of Vidyādhara women as well as their sporting-grounds (so) pleasing to the mind. (12) With its cascades and springs flowing here and there this mountain looks like an elephant with ichor exuding from its temples. (13) What man will the wind issuing from the caves, catching (on its way) numerous odours emanating from various flowers, not enrapture, regaling his olfactory sense? (14) If I dwell in this forest for many autumns with you and Lakṣmaṇa, O irreproachable lady, grief will not overpower me. (15) I am really enamoured of this enjoyable mountain containing abundant flowers and fruits, (nay) inhabited by flocks of birds of every description and adorned with charming peaks, O proud lady ! (16) A twofold gain has been secured by me through this exile (of mine), *viz*, that I have got square with my father, who was devoted to piety (in the form of truthfulness), and the pleasure of Bharata has been accomplished. (17) Do you feel happy in Chitrakoot with me, beholding various objects agreeable to yonr mind, speech and body ? (18)

इदमेवामृतं प्राहू राज्ञि राजर्षयः परे । वनवासं भवार्थाय प्रेत्य मे प्रपितामहाः ॥१९॥
शिलाः शैलस्य शोभन्ते विशालाः शतशोऽभितः । बहुला बहुलैर्वर्णैर्नीलपीतसितारुणैः ॥२०॥
निशि भान्त्यचलेन्द्रस्य हुताशनशिखा इव । ओषध्यः स्वप्रभालक्ष्म्या भ्राजमानाः सहस्रशः ॥२१॥
केचित् क्षयनिभा देशाः केचिदुद्यानसंनिभाः । केचिदेकशिला भान्ति पर्वतस्यास्य भामिनि ॥२२॥
भित्त्वेव वसुधां भाति चित्रकूटः समुत्थितः । चित्रकूटस्य कूटोऽयं दृश्यते सर्वतः शुभः ॥२३॥
कुष्ठस्थगरपुंनागभूर्जपत्रोत्तरच्छदान् । कामिनां स्वास्तरान् पश्य कुशेशयदलायुतान् ॥२४॥
मृदिताश्चापविद्धाश्च दृश्यन्ते कमलस्रजः । कामिभिर्वनिते पश्य फलानि विविधानि च ॥२५॥
वस्वौकसारां नलिनीमतीत्यैवोत्तरान् कुरून् । पर्वतश्चित्रकूटोऽसौ बहुमूलफलोदकः ॥२६॥
इमं तु कालं वनिते विजह्रिवांस्त्वया च सीते सह लक्ष्मणेन ।
रतिं प्रपत्स्ये कुलधर्मवर्धिनीं सतां पथि स्वैर्नियमैः परैः स्थितः ॥२७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुर्नवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ९४ ॥

"My forefathers (Manu and others), (who were all) foremost royal sages, O my queen, have pronounced such (disciplined) residence in the forest as nectar-like and as conducive to cessation from rebirth after death. (19) Large rocks of various sizes and shapes and distinguished by different colours such as blue, yellow, white and ruddy shine brightly in hundreds on every side of the mountain. (20) Shining with the wealth of their splendour herbs in their thousands sparkle like flames of fire on the top of the mountain at night. (21) Some parts of this mountain (consisting as they do of dense clusters of Palāśa trees) look like houses, while others (which abound in flowers) appear like gardens, while still others consist of (huge) single blocks of stone, O proud lady ! (22) Chitrakoot appears as though risen having split the earth. (Nay) this peak of Chitrakoot looks charming on all sides. (23) Behold the cosy beds of voluptuaries covered with the leaves of lilies, Sthagara trees, Punnāga trees and Bhūrja trees as counterpane and overspread with lotus leaves. (24) Here are seen, O darling, wreaths of lotus flowers crushed and cast aside by voluptuaries and (also) behold fruits of various kinds (enjoyed and thrown away by them). (25) Having abundant roots, fruits and water, the yonder Chitrakoot mountain surpasses (even) Vaswaukasārā (more popularly known by the name of Alakā, the capital of Kubera, the god of riches), Nalinī (the capital of Indra, better known by the name of Amarāvatī) and the territory of the Uttarakurus (in loveliness). (26) If for my part, O darling, I (shall be able to) spend this period (of exile extending over fourteen years) merrily (as though in sport) with you, O Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, adhering to the path trodden by the virtuous and conforming to the highest discipline imposed by myself, I shall derive joy enhancing the piety of my race." (27)

Thus ends Canto Ninety-four in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चनवतितमः सर्गः

Canto XCV

In order to humour Sītā, Śrī Rāma gives a description of the river Mandākinī to her.

अथ शैलाद् विनिष्क्रम्य मैथिलीं कोसलेश्वरः । अदर्शयच्छुभजलां रम्यां मन्दाकिनीं नदीम् ॥ १ ॥
अब्रवीच्च वरारोहां चन्द्रचारुनिभाननाम् । विदेहराजस्य सुतां रामो राजीवलोचनः ॥ २ ॥
विचित्रपुलिनां रम्यां हंससारससेविताम् । कुसुमैरुपसम्पन्नां पश्य मन्दाकिनीं नदीम् ॥ ३ ॥
नानाविधैस्तीररुहैर्वृतां पुष्पफलद्रुमैः । राजन्तीं राजराजस्य नलिनीमिव सर्वतः ॥ ४ ॥
मृगयूथनिपीतानि कलुषाम्भांसि साम्प्रतम् । तीर्थानि रमणीयानि रतिं संजनयन्ति मे ॥ ५ ॥
जटाजिनधराः काले वल्कलोत्तरवाससः । ऋषयस्त्ववगाहन्ते नन्दीं मन्दाकिनीं प्रिये ॥ ६ ॥
आदित्यमुपतिष्ठन्ते नियमादूर्ध्वबाहवः । एते परे विशालाक्षि मुनयः संशितव्रताः ॥ ७ ॥

Then, turning away from the mountain, Śrī Rāma (the prospective ruler of the kingdom of Kosala) pointed out to Sītā (daughter of the king of Mithilā) the delightful river Mandākinī, carrying holy waters. (1) Nay, the lotus-eyed Śrī Rāma spoke (as follows) to Sītā (the daughter of the king of Videhas) of charming limbs and with a lovely countenance resembling the moon :—(2) "Behold the beautiful river Mandākinī with its delightful banks,—a stream inhabited by swans and cranes and rich in flowers, (nay) hemmed in with trees of various kinds growing on its banks and laden with flowers and fruits,—and spreading its charms all round like the lake (Saugandhika) of Kubera (the ruler of Yakṣas). (3-4) The delightful fords, even though their waters are turbid (just) at present (evidently) because herds of deer have drunk their fill from them, exercise their charm on me. (5) Sages, for their part, wearing matted locks and with deerskin wrapped about their loins and having the bark of trees for their upper garment take a dip in the river Mandākinī at the appointed hour, my darling! (6) Here are other ascetics of austere vows praying to the sun-god with uplifted arms according to the scriptural injunctions, O lady with big eyes! (7)

मारुतोद्धूतशिखरैः प्रनृत्त इव पर्वतः । पादपैः पुष्पपत्राणि सृजद्भिरभितो नदीम् ॥ ८ ॥
क्वचिन्मणिनिकाशोदां क्वचित् पुलिनशालिनीम् । क्वचित् सिद्धजनाकीर्णां पश्य मन्दाकिनीं नदीम् ॥ ९ ॥
निर्धूतान् वायुना पश्य विततान् पुष्पसंचयान् । पोप्लूयमानानपरान् पश्य त्वं तनुमध्यमे ॥१०॥
पश्यैतद्वल्गुवचसो रथाङ्गाह्वयना द्विजाः । अधिरोहन्ति कल्याणि निष्कूजन्तः शुभा गिरः ॥११॥
दर्शनं चित्रकूटस्य मन्दाकिन्याश्च शोभने । अधिकं पुरवासाच्च मन्ये तव च दर्शनात् ॥१२॥
विधूतकल्मषैः सिद्धैस्तपोदमशमान्वितैः । नित्यविक्षोभितजलां विगाहस्व मया सह ॥१३॥
सखीवच्च विगाहस्व सीते मन्दाकिनीं नदीन् । कमलान्यवमज्जन्ती पुष्कराणि च भामिनि ॥१४॥

"With its trees—whose tops are shaken by the wind—shedding flowers and leaves all along the river the mountain looks as if it has started dancing. (8) Behold the river Mandākinī whose waters are sparkling like pearls at one place, (nay) which looks charming with its sandy banks at another and which is crowded with Siddhas (a class of semi-divine beings endowed with mystic powers from their very birth) at a third place. (9) Behold you heaps of flowers shaken down by the wind and scattered (on both the banks of the river) and other heaps continuously floating (along the current), O lady with a slender waist! (10) Behold how these melodious Chakrawāka birds are ascending the banks uttering charming notes, O blessed lady! (11) I value the sight of Chitrakoot as well as of the Mandākinī more than even residence in the capital particularly because of your sight, O charming lady! (12) Take a dip with me in this river, whose waters are ever agitated (through daily bath) by Siddhas endowed with austerity and control of the senses and mind and whose sins have been completely shaken off. (13) Nay, (freely) take a dip in the river Mandākinī (even) as a friend would sport in the company of her friend, submerging (out of fun) the red and white lotuses (in which the river abounds), O proud lady! (14)

त्वं पौरजनवद् व्यालानयोध्यामिव पर्वतम् । मन्यस्व वनिते नित्यं सरयूवदिमां नदीम् ॥१५॥
लक्ष्मणश्चैव धर्मात्मा मन्निदेशे व्यवस्थितः । त्वं चानुकूला वैदेहि प्रीतिं जनयती मम ॥१६॥
उपस्पृशंस्त्रिषवणं मधुमूलफलाशनः । नायोध्यायै न राज्याय स्पृहये च त्वया सह ॥१७॥
इमां हि रम्यां गजयूथलोडितां निपीततोयां गजसिंहवानरैः ।
सुपुष्पितां पुष्पभरैरलंकृतां न सोऽस्ति यः स्यान्न गतक्लमः सुखी ॥१८॥
इतीव रामो बहु संगतं वचः प्रियासहायः सरितं प्रति ब्रुवन् ।
चचार रम्यं नयनाञ्जनप्रभं स चित्रकूटं रघुवंशवर्धनः ॥१९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चनवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ९५ ॥

"Esteem you ever the dwellers in the forest as you would the citizens of Ayodhya, the mountain (Chitrakoot) as (the city of) Ayodhya, and this river (Mandākinī) as the Sarayu, my darling! (15) Not only is Lakṣmaṇa, whose mind is given to righteousness, fully determined to carry out my command but you too, O princess of the Videha kingdom, favourably disposed towards me, causing delight to me. (16) Bathing thrice a day (every morning, midday and evening) and living on honey, roots and fruits with you I long neither for Ayodhya nor for its sovereignty! (17) Surely there is no one who will not be relieved of his fatigue and feel refreshed on taking a dip in this delightful river which is churned by herds of elephants, whose waters are partaken of without interruption by elephants, lions and monkeys (alike), which is hemmed with trees laden with blossom and as such remains decked with loads of flowers (all through the year)." (18) Offering many such cogent remarks concerning the (aforesaid) river, the celebrated Śrī Rāma, the promoter of the race of Raghu, wandered in the company of his beloved spouse (Sitā) over the lovely Chitrakoot, which shone like a heap of collyrium. (19)

Thus ends Canto Ninety-five in the Ayodhya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Valmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षण्णवतितमः सर्गः

Canto XCVI

While recreating himself in the company of Sītā on the lovely hills of Chitrakoot, Śrī Rāma beholds all of a sudden a large cloud of dust screening the sun and hears a loud noise and despatches Lakṣmaṇa to ascertain the cause. Lakṣmaṇa thereupon climbs up the top of a lofty tree and catching sight of an army with the chariot of its leader distinguished by an ensign bearing the device of a Kovidāra tree, hastily concludes that Bharata has come all the way to dispose of Śrī Rāma and thereby to make himself secure on the throne of Ayodhya. Returning apace to the presence of Śrī Rāma he disburdens himself of his suspicions and speaks angrily about Bharata swearing that he will kill the intruder.

तां तदा दर्शयित्वा तु मैथिलीं गिरिनिम्नगाम् । निषसाद गिरिप्रस्थे सीतां मांसेन छन्दयन् ॥ १ ॥
इदं मेध्यमिदं स्वादु निष्टप्तमिदमग्निना । एवमास्ते स धर्मात्मा सीतया सह राघवः ॥ २ ॥
तथा तत्रासतस्तस्य भरतस्योपयायिनः । सैन्यरेणुश्च शब्दश्च प्रादुरास्तां नभस्पृशौ ॥ ३ ॥
एतस्मिन्नन्तरे त्रस्ताः शब्देन महता ततः । अर्दिता यूथपा मत्ताः स्वयूथाद् दुद्रुवुर्दिशः ॥ ४ ॥
स तं सैन्यसमुद्भूतं शब्दं शुश्राव राघवः । तांश्च विप्रद्रुतान् सर्वान् यूथपानन्ववैक्षत ॥ ५ ॥
तांश्च विप्रद्रुतान् दृष्ट्वा तं च श्रुत्वा महास्वनम् । उवाच रामः सौमित्रिं लक्ष्मणं दीप्ततेजसम् ॥ ६ ॥
हन्त लक्ष्मण पश्येह सुमित्रा सुप्रजास्त्वया । भीमस्तनितगम्भीरं तुमुलः श्रूयते स्वनः ॥ ७ ॥
गजयूथानि वारण्ये महिषा वा महावने । वित्रासिता मृगाः सिंहैः सहसा प्रद्रुता दिशः ॥ ८ ॥
राजा वा राजपुत्रो वा मृगयामटते वने । अन्यद्वा श्वापदं किंचित् सौमित्रे ज्ञातुमर्हसि ॥ ९ ॥
सुदुश्चरो गिरिश्चायं पक्षिणामपि लक्ष्मण । सर्वमेतद् यथातत्त्वमभिज्ञातुमिहार्हसि ॥ १० ॥

Having shown on that occasion the hilly stream (Mandākinī) to the aforesaid Sītā (the princess of Mithila), Śrī Rāma for his part sat down on a single (flat) rock humouring Sītā with a description of the pulp of fruits fit for the consumption of ascetics (as follows) :—(1) "This (fruit) is fit for being offered as an oblation into the sacred fire, this is luscious and this (bulb) has been roasted well in fire." In this way the celebrated Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), whose mind was devoted to righteousness, spent his time with Sītā. (2) While he remained sitting there as aforesaid, the dust raised by the army of Bharata, who was approaching Śrī Rāma, as well as their tramp rose to the skies. (3) In the meantime alarmed and agitated by that great noise the lordly elephants in rut ran away from their herd in various directions. (4) The aforesaid Śrī Rāma heard that noise caused by the army and (also) perceived all those leaders of herds of elephants that had taken flight (from their herd). (5) Seeing them run away and also hearing that great noise, Śrī Rāma spoke (as follows) to Lakṣmaṇa, son of Sumitrā, of resplendent glory :—(6) "Hullo Lakṣmaṇa, Sumitrā in this world is blessed with a worthy son in you. See how this confused noise is being heard, deep as a terrible crash of thunder. (7) How is it that herds of elephants in the forest or (wild) buffaloes in the great forest or deer have all of a sudden taken to flight helter-skelter in various directions as though scared by lions? (8) Is any king or prince going about hunting in the forest? Or has any other beast of prey appeared (here)? You ought to find this out, O son of Sumitrā! (9) Moreover this mountain, O Lakṣmaṇa, is most difficult of access even to birds (of other parts). You ought (therefore) to ascertain all this correctly here." (10)

स लक्ष्मणः संत्वरितः सालमारुह्य पुष्पितम् । प्रेक्षमाणो दिशः सर्वाः पूर्वां दिशमवैक्षत ॥११॥
उदङ्मुखः प्रेक्षमाणो ददर्श महतीं चमूम् । गजाश्वरथसम्बाधां यत्तैर्युक्तां पदातिभिः ॥१२॥
तामश्वरथसम्पूर्णां रथध्वजविभूषिताम् । शशंस सेनां रामाय वचनं चेदमब्रवीत् ॥१३॥
अग्निं संशमयत्वार्यः सीता च भजतां गुहाम् । सज्जं कुरुष्व चापं च शरांश्च कवचं तथा ॥१४॥
तं रामः पुरुषव्याघ्रो लक्ष्मणं प्रत्युवाच ह । अङ्गावेक्षस्व सौमित्रे कस्येमां मन्यसे चमूम् ॥१५॥
एवमुक्तस्तु रामेण लक्ष्मणो वाक्यमब्रवीत् । दिधक्षन्निव तां सेनां रुषितः पावको यथा ॥१६॥
सम्पन्नं राज्यमिच्छंस्तु व्यक्तं प्राप्याभिषेचनम् । आवां हन्तुं समभ्येति कैकेय्या भरतः सुतः ॥१७॥
एष वै सुमहाञ्छ्रीमान् विटपी सम्प्रकाशते । विराजत्युज्ज्वलस्कन्धः कोविदारध्वजो रथे ॥१८॥
भजन्त्येते यथाकाममश्वानारुह्य शीघ्रगान् । एते भ्राजन्ति संहृष्टा गजानारुह्य सादिनः ॥१९॥
गृहीतधनुषावावां गिरिं वीर श्रयावहे । अथवेहैव तिष्ठावः संनद्धावुद्यतायुधौ ॥२०॥

Enjoined thus the celebrated Lakṣmaṇa climbed up with great expedition a sal tree in blossom and, surveying all the quarters, fixed his gaze on the eastern quarter. (11) Looking intently with his face (now) turned northward he espied a large army thick with elephants, horses and chariots and conjoined with vigilant foot-soldiers. (12) He announced to Śrī Rāma the approach of that army abounding in horses and chariots and adorned with ensigns borne on chariots, and made the following submission :—(13) "Let your worthy self fully extinguish the fire (lest the smoke issuing from it should attract the army to this spot) and let Sītā seek a cave. Nay, keep ready your bow, as well as arrows and armour." (14) To the said Lakṣmaṇa, they say, Śrī Rāma, a (veritable) tiger among men, replied (as follows) :—"Dear Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā), please look carefully (at the device of the ensign) and tell me whose army you consider it to be." (15) Commanded thus by Śrī Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa for his part submitted as follows, (gazing at the army) as though keen to consume it like an angry fire :—(16) "Evidently having secured consecration on the throne of Ayodhya and keen to attain undisputed sovereignty, Bharata, son of Kaikeyī, for his part, comes fully prepared to kill us (both). (17) An ensign bearing the device of a Kovidāra tree with a white trunk really shines prominently over there on a chariot standing where that gigantic tree rich in flowers and fruits etc. is clearly visible. (18) Mounting swift-going horses as they would, these horsemen are heading towards this spot. Mounting elephants these riders on elephants (too) appear highly rejoiced (while marching towards this place). (19) Taking up our bows let us both station ourselves on the summit of the mountain, O heroic prince! Or clothed with mail let us continue on this very spot with uplifted weapons. (20)

अपि नौ वशमागच्छेत् कोविदारध्वजो रणे । अपि द्रक्ष्यामि भरतं यत्कृते व्यसनं महत् ॥२१॥
त्वया राघव सम्प्राप्तं सीतया च मया तथा । यन्निमित्तं भवान् राज्याच्च्युतो राघव शाश्वतात् ॥२२॥
सम्प्राप्तोऽयमरिर्वीर भरतो वध्य एव हि । भरतस्य वधे दोषं नाहं पश्यामि राघव ॥२३॥
पूर्वापकारिणं हत्वा न ह्यधर्मेण युज्यते । पूर्वापकारी भरतस्त्यागेऽधर्मश्च राघव ॥२४॥
एतस्मिन् निहते कृत्स्नामनुशाधि वसुंधराम् । अद्य पुत्रं हतं संख्ये कैकेयी राज्यकामुका ॥२५॥
मया पश्येत् सुदुःखार्ता हस्तिभिन्नमिव द्रुमम् । कैकेयीं च वधिष्यामि सानुबन्धां सबान्धवाम् ॥२६॥
कलुषेणाद्य महता मेदिनी परिमुच्यताम् । अद्येमं संयतं क्रोधमसत्कारं च मानद ॥२७॥
मोक्ष्यामि शत्रुसैन्येषु कक्षेष्विव हुताशनम् । अद्यैव चित्रकूटस्य काननं निशितैः शरैः ॥२८॥
छिन्दञ्छत्रुशरीराणि करिष्ये शोणितोक्षितम् । शरैर्निर्भिन्नहृदयान् कुञ्जरांस्तुरगांस्तथा ॥२९॥
श्वापदाः परिकर्षन्तु नरांश्च निहतान् मया ।
शराणां धनुषश्चाहमनृणोऽस्मिन् महावने । ससैन्यं भरतं हत्वा भविष्यामि न संशयः ॥३०॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षण्णवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ९६ ॥

"The ensign bearing the device of a Kovidāra tree will surely be brought under our control, and I am glad I shall (be able to) see (face to face). Bharata, on whose account great suffering has been undergone by you, O scion of Raghu, as well as by Sītā and myself, and for whose sake, O Rāma, you have been deprived of a kingdom which was ever yours. (21-22) Bharata over these, who has arrived in state as an adversary, surely deserves to be killed outright, O heroic prince! I see no wrong in killing Bharata, O scion of Raghu! (23) Killing a man who has wronged one before one surely does not get contaminated with sin. Bharata has wronged you heretofore; hence there is sin (only) in leaving him alone, O scion of Raghu! (24) When Bharata has been killed, rule over the entire globe. Sore stricken with sorrow, Kaikeyī, who is covetous of sovereignty, will find her son killed in battle by me like a tree uprooted by an elephant. I shall kill Kaikeyī too with her dependants and relations. (25-26) Let the earth be purged of this sin (in the shape of Kaikeyī). Today I shall release my repressed fury and scorn (in the shape of arrows) against the enemy's forces even as one would spit fire on dried bushes, O bestower of honour! Tearing to pieces the bodies of the enemies with sharp-pointed arrows I shall this very day drench the forest of Chitrakoot with blood. Let beasts of prey drag hither and thither the elephants and horses, whose heart is pierced through with arrows, as well as the men (that will be) slain by me. Having killed Bharata with his army in this great forest I shall get square with my arrows and bow (by supplying them with abundant food) : there is no doubt about it." (27—30)

Thus ends Canto Ninety-six in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तनवतितमः सर्गः

Canto XCVII

Pointing out to Lakṣmaṇa, who was waxing indignant at Bharata, the impropriety of killing the latter, Śrī Rāma pacifies him by assuring him of the pious intentions of Bharata. Ashamed of himself to hear the opinion of his brother about Bharata, and climbing down the tree, Lakṣmaṇa hides his shame by changing the topic. Commanded by Bharata, who was anxious to avoid causing disturbance to the hermitage occupied by Śrī Rāma, the army encamps round about Chitrakoot.

सुसंरब्धं तु भरतं लक्ष्मणं क्रोधमूर्च्छितम् । रामस्तु परिसान्त्व्याथ वचनं चेदमब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
किमत्र धनुषा कार्यमसिना वा सचर्मणा । महाबले महोत्साहे भरते स्वयमागते ॥ २ ॥
पितुः सत्यं प्रतिश्रुत्य हत्वा भरतमाहवे । किं करिष्यामि राज्येन सापवादेन लक्ष्मण ॥ ३ ॥
यद् द्रव्यं बान्धवानां वा मित्राणां वा क्षये भवेत् । नाहं तत् प्रतिगृह्णीयां भक्ष्यान् विषकृतानिव ॥ ४ ॥
धर्ममर्थं च कामं च पृथिवीं चापि लक्ष्मण । इच्छामि भवतामर्थे एतत् प्रतिशृणोमि ते ॥ ५ ॥
भ्रातॄणां संग्रहार्थं च सुखार्थं चापि लक्ष्मण । राज्यमप्यहमिच्छामि सत्येनायुधमालभे ॥ ६ ॥

Śrī Rāma, for his part, pacified in every way Lakṣmaṇa, who actually bore an utterly bellicose attitude towards Bharata and was beside himself with rage, and then spoke to him as follows :—(1) "When the very mighty Bharata, full of great longing (to see me), has turned up in person, what purpose will be served at this moment with a bow or with a sword accompanied by a shield ? (2) Having given (in the first instance) my word of honour to implement the pledge of my father and killed Bharata in an encounter, O Lakṣmaṇa, what shall I do with a kingdom stained with infamy (that will be occasioned by my going back upon my word of honour and robbing Bharata of the gift bestowed on him by our father) ? (3) I am not going to accept a fortune that will descend on the destruction of my kinsfolk or friends any more than one would partake of dishes mixed with poison. (4) I seek virtue, fortune, gratification of senses and even (sovereignty of) the earth, O Lakṣmaṇa, (only) for you (my brothers, and not for any personal gain) : I give this word of honour to you. (5) I seek sovereignty too (only) for the protection and gratification of my brothers, O Lakṣmaṇa : I swear by my weapon (bow). (6)

नेयं मम मही सौम्य दुर्लभा सागराम्बरा । नहीच्छेयमधर्मेण शक्रत्वमपि लक्ष्मण ॥ ७ ॥
यद् विना भरतं त्वां च शत्रुघ्नं वापि मानद । भवेन्मम सुखं किंचिद् भस्म तत् कुरुतां शिखी ॥ ८ ॥
मन्येऽहमागतोऽयोध्यां भरतो भ्रातृवत्सलः । मम प्राणैः प्रियतरः कुलधर्ममनुस्मरन् ॥ ९ ॥
श्रुत्वा प्रव्राजितं मां हि जटावल्कलधारिणम् । जानक्या सहितं वीर त्वया च पुरुषोत्तम ॥१०॥

स्नेहेनाक्रान्तहृदयः शोकेनाकुलितेन्द्रियः । द्रष्टुमभ्यागतो ह्येष भरतो नान्यथाऽऽगतः ॥११॥
अम्बां च केकयीं रुष्य भरतश्चाप्रियं वदन् । प्रसाद्य पितरं श्रीमान् राज्यं मे दातुमागतः ॥१२॥

"(The sovereignty of) this globe, hemmed in by the sea, O gentle brother, is not difficult for me to acquire; but I do not covet even the position of Indra through unrighteousness, O Lakṣmaṇa! (7) If any joy comes to me without Bharata and yourself or even without Śatrughna, O respecter of others, let fire reduce it to ashes. (8) I believe, O gallant brother, that, hearing, when back in Ayodhya, of myself having been actually exiled with Sītā (daughter of Janaka) and yourself, (and having proceeded to the forest) wearing matted locks and clad in the bark of trees, O jewel among men, Bharata, who is (so) fond of his brothers, and is dearer to me than life (itself), must have found his heart overwhelmed with affection and his mind distracted through grief and has surely come all the way to see me, bearing in mind the usage of his race (in the shape of installing the eldest son on the throne on the death of a king) and that the said Bharata has not come with any other motive. (9—11) (Nay) getting angry with mother Kaikeyī and speaking unkind words to her and having obtained the consent of our father, the glorious Bharata has (evidently) come to offer the throne to me. (12)

प्राप्तकालं यथैषोऽस्मान् भरतो द्रष्टुमर्हति । अस्मासु मनसाप्येष नाहितं किंचिदाचरेत् ॥१३॥
विप्रियं कृतपूर्वं ते भरतेन कदा नु किम् । ईदृशं वा भयं तेऽद्य भरतं यद् विशङ्कसे ॥१४॥
नहि ते निष्ठुरं वाच्यो भरतो नाप्रियं वचः । अहं ह्यप्रियमुक्तः स्यां भरतस्याप्रिये कृते ॥१५॥
कथं नु पुत्राः पितरं हन्युः कस्यांचिदापदि । भ्राता वा भ्रातरं हन्यात् सौमित्रे प्राणमात्मनः ॥१६॥
यदि राज्यस्य हेतोस्त्वमिमां वाचं प्रभाषसे । वक्ष्यामि भरतं दृष्ट्वा राज्यमस्मै प्रदीयताम् ॥१७॥
उच्यमानो हि भरतो मया लक्ष्मण तद्वचः । राज्यमस्मै प्रयच्छेति बाढमित्येव मंस्यते ॥१८॥

"It is (but) opportune that Bharata sees us—(in fact) he deserves to see us. He would not do any harm to us even with his mind. (13) I wonder when and what offence was given to you by Bharata in the past and when any such alarming thing was said by him that you mistrust Bharata today. (14) Bharata should under no circumstances be spoken harshly to nor should unkind words be addressed to him. If any offence is given to Bharata, indeed it would mean that I am told unpleasant things. (15) How on earth can sons take the life of their father in any trying situation or how can a brother kill his (own) brother, his (very) life, O son of Sumitrā? (16) If you utter those words (signifying your intention to kill Bharata) for the sake of sovereignty, I shall speak to Bharata as follows on seeing him: 'Let the kingdom be given away for good to Lakṣmaṇa.' (17) Being addressed by me in the words 'Bestow the kingdom on Lakṣmaṇa', Bharata, O Lakṣmaṇa, will surely accept my command saying 'amen!'" (18)

तथोक्तो धर्मशीलेन भ्रात्रा तस्य हिते रतः । लक्ष्मणः प्रविवेशेव स्वानि गात्राणि लज्जया ॥१९॥
तद्वाक्यं लक्ष्मणः श्रुत्वा व्रीडितः प्रत्युवाच ह । त्वां मन्ये द्रष्टुमायातः पिता दशरथः स्वयम् ॥२०॥
व्रीडितं लक्ष्मणं दृष्ट्वा राघवः प्रत्युवाच ह । एष मन्ये महाबाहुरिहास्मान् द्रष्टुमागतः ॥२१॥
अथवा नौ ध्रुवं मन्ये मन्यमानः सुखोचितौ । वनवासमनुध्याय गृहाय प्रतिनेष्यति ॥२२॥

इमां चाप्येष वैदेहीमत्यन्तसुखसेविनीम् । पिता मे राघवः श्रीमान् वनादादाय यास्यति ॥२३॥
एतौ तौ सम्प्रकाशेते गोत्रवन्तौ मनोरमौ । वायुवेगसमौ वीरौ जवनौ तुरगोत्तमौ ॥२४॥
स एष सुमहाकायः कम्पते वाहिनीमुखे । नागः शत्रुंजयो नाम वृद्धस्तातस्य धीमतः ॥२५॥
न तु पश्यामि तच्छत्रं पाण्डुरं लोकविश्रुतम् । पितुर्दिव्यं महाभाग संशयो भवतीह मे ॥२६॥
वृक्षाग्रादवरोह त्वं कुरु लक्ष्मण मद्वचः । इतीव रामो धर्मात्मा सौमित्रिं तमुवाच ह ॥२७॥

Admonished thus by his (eldest) brother (Śrī Rāma) of virtuous disposition, Lakṣmaṇa, who was devoted to the interests of the latter, hid himself in his own limbs as it were out of shame. (19) Put out of countenance to hear the aforesaid admonition, Lakṣmaṇa, they say, submitted as follows:—"I believe our father, Emperor Daśaratha himself, has come to see you." (20) Finding Lakṣmaṇa abashed, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), they say, replied (as follows):—"I (too) believe that the mighty-armed emperor has (personally) come to see us here. (21) Nay, considering us to be deserving of comfort and bearing in mind the privations attendant on residence in a forest, father will, I believe, surely take us back home. (22) Again, my aforesaid father, the glorious Daśaratha (a scion of Raghu), will return (to the capital) taking (with him) from the forest this Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) too, who has (always) enjoyed the utmost amenities (of life). (23) Here are to be clearly seen the two spirited and excellent fleet horses of noble breed, pleasing to the mind and vying with the wind in swiftness. (24) Here is the well-known gigantic and aged elephant, Śatruñjaya by name, of our wise father, rocking about at the head of the army. (25) I, however, do not behold that white heavenly umbrella of my father, well-known in the world, O highly blessed one! Doubt on this point fills my mind. (26) Do my bidding, O Lakṣmaṇa, and climb you down from the tree-top." In these precise words did Śrī Rāma, whose mind was given to piety, address the celebrated Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā): so the tradition goes. (27)

अवतीर्य तु सालाग्रात् तस्मात् स समितिंजयः । लक्ष्मणः प्राञ्जलिर्भूत्वा तस्थौ रामस्य पार्श्वतः ॥२८॥
भरतेनाथ संदिष्टा सम्मर्दो न भवेदिति । समन्तात् तस्य शैलस्य सेना वासमकल्पयत् ॥२९॥
अध्यर्धमिक्ष्वाकुचमूर्योजनं पर्वतस्य ह । पार्श्वे न्यविशदावृत्य गजवाजिनराकुला ॥३०॥
सा चित्रकूटे भरतेन सेना धर्मं पुरस्कृत्य विधूय दर्पम् ।
प्रसादनार्थं रघुनन्दनस्य विरोचते नीतिमता प्रणीता ॥३१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्तनवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ९७ ॥

Getting down from that top of the sal tree, the aforesaid Lakṣmaṇa, the conqueror of hostile forces, for his part, stood by the side of Śrī Rāma with joined palms. (28) Admonished by Bharata in the words "Let there be no molestation (to the hermitage of Śrī Rāma)", his army encamped round about that mountain. (29) Occupying an area of one Yojana and a half, they say, the army of Bharata (of Ikṣwāku's line), full of elephants, horses and men, encamped by the side of the mountain. (30) Brought with the purpose of propitiating Śrī Rāma (the delight of the Raghus) by Bharata, who was rich in the sense of propriety, placing righteousness in the forefront and shaking off vanity, the aforesaid army shone brightly in the vicinity of Chitrakoot. (31)

Thus ends Canto Ninety-seven in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टनवतितमः सर्गः

Canto XCVIII

Telling off Guha and Śatrughna with their followers to find out the hermitage of Śrī Rāma, Bharata himself, who was keen to see Śrī Rāma, goes out in search of his hermitage with the ministers, walking all the way and envying the good fortune of Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, who were living with Śrī Rāma; and, reaching the foot of a sal tree and concluding the place from the presence of smoke near by to be a human habitation and ruling out the possibility of any other human being living in that lonely forest, he eagerly hastens forward in the hope of meeting Śrī Rāma.

निवेश्य सेनां तु विभुः पद्भ्यां पादवतां वरः । अभिगन्तुं स काकुत्स्थमियेष गुरुवर्तकम् ॥ १ ॥
निविष्टमात्रे सैन्ये तु यथोद्देशं विनीतवत् । भरतो भ्रातरं वाक्यं शत्रुघ्नमिदमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥
क्षिप्रं वनमिदं सौम्य नरसंघैः समन्ततः । लुब्धैश्च सहितैरेभिस्त्वमन्वेषितुमर्हसि ॥ ३ ॥
गुहो ज्ञातिसहस्रेण शरचापासिपाणिना । समन्वेषतु काकुत्स्थावस्मिन् परिवृतः स्वयम् ॥ ४ ॥
अमात्यैः सह पौरैश्च गुरुभिश्च द्विजातिभिः । सह सर्वं चरिष्यामि पद्भ्यां परिवृतः स्वयम् ॥ ५ ॥
यावन्न रामं द्रक्ष्यामि लक्ष्मणं वा महाबलम् । वैदेहीं वा महाभागां न मे शान्तिर्भविष्यति ॥ ६ ॥
यावन्न चन्द्रसंकाशं तद् द्रक्ष्यामि शुभाननम् । भ्रातुः पद्मविशालाक्षं न मे शान्तिर्भविष्यति ॥ ७ ॥

Having encamped the army (by the side of Chitrakoot) the powerful Bharata, for his part, who was the foremost of those endowed with feet, desired to approach on foot Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), who was implementing the words of his father. (1) The army having barely encamped in a well-behaved manner according to (Bharata's) directions, Bharata for his part spoke the following words to his (younger half-) brother, Śatrughna:— (2) "With these multitudes of men (forming your retinue) accompanied by the Niṣādas (the followers of Guha), O gentle brother, you ought quickly to search this forest all round. (3) Let Guha, surrounded by a thousand of his clansmen, carrying arrows, a bow and a sword in their hands, personally search for Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (the two scions of Kakutstha) in this forest. (4) In the company of and surrounded by ministers and citizens, preceptors and (other) Brahmans, I shall personally go round the whole forest on foot. (5) There will be no peace for me until I see Śrī Rāma or the very mighty Lakṣmaṇa or the highly fortunate Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory). (6) There will be no peace (of mind) to me until I look on the well-known blessed countenance of my (elder) brother, shining brightly like the (full) moon and distinguished by eyes big as the lotus. (7)

सिद्धार्थः खलु सौमित्रिर्यश्चन्द्रविमलोपमम् । मुखं पश्यति रामस्य राजीवाक्षं महाद्युति ॥ ८ ॥
यावन्न चरणौ भ्रातुः पार्थिवव्यञ्जनान्वितौ । शिरसा प्रग्रहीष्यामि न मे शान्तिर्भविष्यति ॥ ९ ॥
यावन्न राज्ये राज्यार्हः पितृपैतामहे स्थितः । अभिषिक्तो जलक्लिन्नो न मे शान्तिर्भविष्यति ॥१०॥
कृतकृत्या महाभागा वैदेही जनकात्मजा । भर्तारं सागरान्तायाः पृथिव्या यानुगच्छति ॥११॥
सुशुभश्चित्रकूटोऽसौ गिरिराजसमो गिरिः । यस्मिन् वसति काकुत्स्थः कुबेर इव नन्दने ॥१२॥
कृतकार्यमिदं दुर्गवनं व्यालनिषेवितम् । यदध्यास्ते महाराजो रामः शस्त्रभृतां वरः ॥१३॥

"Accomplished of purpose indeed is Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) who beholds the highly resplendent face of Śrī Rāma, resembling the clear moon and marked with lotus-like eyes. (8) There will be no peace (of mind) for me until I hold firmly on my head the soles of my (elder) brother adorned with the marks of royalty (*viz*, the figures of a thunderbolt, flag, lotus, umbrella and so on,). (9) There will be no peace (of mind) to me until Śrī Rāma (who deserves the kingship) is installed on the ancestral throne, (duly) consecrated and wet with water (after a ceremonial bath forming part of the consecration). (10) The highly blessed Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory), the daughter of Janaka, who follows (in the footsteps of) her husband, the protector of the earth extending up to the ocean, has accomplished her object. (11) Highly blessed is this mountain Chitrakoot, ranking with the Himalayan range, on which dwells Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) as does Kubera (the god of riches) in the Chaitraratha garden (which delights him). (12) This forest, which is difficult of access and is infested with beasts of prey, and which the great king Rāma, the foremost of those wielding arms, is occupying (at present) is (surely) accomplished of purpose." (13)

एवमुक्त्वा महाबाहुर्भरतः पुरुषर्षभः । पद्भ्यामेव महातेजाः प्रविवेश महद् वनम् ॥१४॥
स तानि द्रुमजालानि जातानि गिरिसानुषु । पुष्पिताग्राणि मध्येन जगाम वदतां वरः ॥१५॥
स गिरेश्चित्रकूटस्य सालमारुह्य सत्वरम् । रामाश्रमगतस्याग्नेर्ददर्श ध्वजमुच्छ्रितम् ॥१६॥
तं दृष्ट्वा भरतः श्रीमान् मुमोद सहबान्धवः । अत्र राम इति ज्ञात्वा गतः पारमिवाम्भसः ॥१७॥
स चित्रकूटे तु गिरौ निशम्य रामाश्रमं पुण्यजनोपपन्नम् ।
गुहेन सार्धं त्वरितो जगाम पुनर्निवेश्यैव चमूं महात्मा ॥१८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टनवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ९८ ॥

Saying so, the mighty-armed Bharata, a jewel among men, who was endowed with exceptional glory, entered the great forest only on foot. (14) That jewel among the eloquent passed through clusters of trees grown on mountain-peaks—trees whose tops were full of blossom. (15) Hastily climbing up a sal tree standing on the Chitrakoot mountain, he saw a towering (column of) smoke issuing from fire in Śrī Rāma's hermitage. (16) Perceiving the smoke and concluding that Śrī Rāma was there, the glorious Bharata with his kinsman (Śatrughna) rejoiced like one who had reached the end of (an expanse of) water. (17) Seeing on the Chitrakoot mountain the hermitage of Śrī Rāma, frequented by holy men, and sending back (for settling down in camps) the troops (that had been sent by him in search of Śrī Rāma), the high-souled Bharata for his part proceeded with quick steps along with Guha (to meet Śrī Rāma). (18)

Thus ends Canto Ninety-eight in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

नवनवतितमः सर्गः

Canto XCIX

Requesting Vasiṣṭha to fetch his mothers and pressing forward, Bharata reaches the hut, made of leafy twigs, in which the three exiles were living. While attempting to hail Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa on seeing them, he stumbles down even on an even ground, his eyes getting bedimmed with tears at the sight of their ascetic garb. Śrī Rāma hastens to lift him up and clasps him to his bosom. Sumantra and Guha as well meet Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa.

निविष्टायां तु सेनायामुत्सुको भरतस्ततः । जगाम भ्रातरं द्रष्टुं शत्रुघ्नमनुदर्शयन् ॥ १ ॥
ऋषिं वसिष्ठं संदिश्य मातॄर्मे शीघ्रमानय । इति त्वरितमग्रे स जगाम गुरुवत्सलः ॥ २ ॥
सुमन्त्रस्त्वपि शत्रुघ्नमदूरादन्वपद्यत । रामदर्शनजस्तर्षो भरतस्येव तस्य च ॥ ३ ॥
गच्छन्नेवाथ भरतस्तापसालयसंस्थिताम् । भ्रातुः पर्णकुटीं श्रीमानुटजं च ददर्श ह ॥ ४ ॥
शालायास्त्वग्रतस्तस्या ददर्श भरतस्तदा । काष्ठानि चावभग्नानि पुष्पाण्यपचितानि च ॥ ५ ॥
स लक्ष्मणस्य रामस्य ददर्शाश्रममीयुषः । कृतं वृक्षेष्वभिज्ञानं कुशचीरैः क्वचित् क्वचित् ॥ ६ ॥
ददर्श भवने तस्मिन् महतः संचयान् कृतान् । मृगाणां महिषाणां च करीषैः शीतकारणात् ॥ ७ ॥

The army having encamped, Bharata for his part, keen as he was to see his (elder) brother, then proceeded to see him, pointing out (on the way) to Śatrughna the marks indicating the presence of a hermitage near by. (1) Requesting Sage Vasiṣṭha in the following words "(Pray) fetch my mothers promptly", Bharata, who was fond of his elder brother, hastily pressed forward. (2) Sumantra too for his part closely followed Śatrughna; (for) an ardent longing for the sight of Śrī Rāma possessed his heart too as Bharata's. (3) Even while proceeding, Bharata, who was (now) radiant (with joy at the prospect of meeting Śrī Rāma), beheld the hut made of leafy twigs belonging to his (elder) brother and built after the style of hermits' dwellings, as well as another cottage (enclosed with a wooden wall and provided with doors, intended for Sītā) : so the tradition goes. (4) In front of that hut Bharata saw at that time hewn pieces of wood as well as flowers gathered for worship. (5) He (also) perceived tokens for indicating the way made on trees here and there with blades of Kuśa grass and strips of cloth by Lakṣmaṇa and Śrī Rāma while returning to the hermitage (from the riverside after a bath or with water fetched from the river). (6) He further beheld in the vicinity of that cottage large heaps made of the dried dung of deer and (wild) buffaloes for protection against cold. (7)

गच्छन्नेव महाबाहुर्द्युतिमान् भरतस्तदा । शत्रुघ्नं चाब्रवीद्धृष्टस्तानमात्यांश्च सर्वशः ॥ ८ ॥
मन्ये प्राप्ताः स्म तं देशं भरद्वाजो यमब्रवीत् । नातिदूरे हि मन्येऽहं नदीं मन्दाकिनीमितः ॥ ९ ॥
उच्चैर्बद्धानि चीराणि लक्ष्मणेन भवेदयम् । अभिज्ञानकृतः पन्था विकाले गन्तुमिच्छता ॥१०॥
इतश्चोदात्तदन्तानां कुञ्जराणां तरस्विनाम् । शैलपार्श्वे परिक्रान्तमन्योन्यमभिगर्जताम् ॥११॥
यमेवाधातुमिच्छन्ति तापसाः सततं वने । तस्यासौ दृश्यते धूमः संकुलः कृष्णवर्त्मनः ॥१२॥
अत्राहं पुरुषव्याघ्रं गुरुसत्कारकारिणम् । आर्यं द्रक्ष्यामि संहृष्टं महर्षिमिव राघवम् ॥१३॥

Nay, even while going the mighty-armed Bharata, who was full of glory, spoke with delight (as follows) on that occasion to Śatrughna as well as to all those ministers (that had accompanied him):—(8) "I believe we have reached that region of which Bharadwāja spoke (to us). I conclude the river Mandākinī to be not very far from this place. (9) Since strips of cloth are seen fastened (to the trees) high up, this may be the path provided with tokens by Lakṣmaṇa wishing to go out (for a bath or in order to bring water from the river) at an odd hour. (10) Nay, on this side do swift-footed elephants distinguished by huge tusks roam about trumpeting at one another in the flanks of the mountain. (11) There can be seen the thick smoke of the (sacred) fire, which ascetics in a forest seek to preserve incessantly (for pouring oblations into it both morning and evening). (12) Here I shall (be able to) see Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), my elder brother, a (veritable) tiger among men, who shows respect to his elders, highly delighted like an eminent sage." (13)

अथ गत्वा मुहूर्तं तु चित्रकूटं स राघवः । मन्दाकिनीमनु प्राप्तस्तं जनं चेदमब्रवीत् ॥१४॥
जगत्यां पुरुषव्याघ्र आस्ते वीरासने रतः । जनेन्द्रो निर्जनं प्राप्य धिङ्मे जन्म सजीवितम् ॥१५॥
मत्कृते व्यसनं प्राप्तो लोकनाथो महाद्युतिः । सर्वान् कामान् परित्यज्य वने वसति राघवः ॥१६॥
इति लोकसमाक्रुष्टः पादेष्वद्य प्रसादयन् । रामं तस्य पतिष्यामि सीताया लक्ष्मणस्य च ॥१७॥

Then, going awhile, the celebrated Bharata (a scion of Raghu) for his part reached Chitrakoot on the bank of the Mandākinī and spoke as follows to those men (that had accompanied him):—(14) "Having reached a lonely place Śrī Rāma (a tiger among men), a ruler of the people, sits delighted on the (bare) ground in the posture of a hero (with his left foot placed on his right knee). Woe be to my birth along with my life! (15) 'Fallen in adversity (in the shape of being deprived of his inheritance and exiled) on my account, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the protector of the world, who is possessed of great splendour, is dwelling in a forest having completely given up all enjoyments.' (16) Reviled thus by the world I shall fall at the feet of Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa today with a view to propitiating them." (17)

एवं स विलपंस्तस्मिन् वने दशरथात्मजः । ददर्श महतीं पुण्यां पर्णशालां मनोरमाम् ॥१८॥
सालतालाश्वकर्णानां पर्णैर्बहुभिरावृताम् । विशालां मृदुविस्तीर्णां कुशैर्वेदिमिवाध्वरे ॥१९॥
शक्रायुधनिकाशैश्च कार्मुकैर्भारसाधनैः । रुक्मपृष्ठैर्महासारैः शोभितां शत्रुबाधकैः ॥२०॥
अर्करश्मिप्रतीकाशैर्घोरैस्तूणगतैः शरैः । शोभितां दीप्तवदनैः सर्पैर्भोगवतीमिव ॥२१॥

महारजतवासोभ्यामसिभ्यां च विराजिताम् । रुक्मबिन्दुविचित्राभ्यां चर्मभ्यां चापि शोभिताम् ॥२२॥
गोधाङ्गुलित्रैरासक्तैश्चित्रकाञ्चनभूषितैः । अरिसंघैरनाधृष्यां मृगैः सिंहगुहामिव ॥२३॥
प्रागुदक्प्रवणां वेदिं विशालां दीप्तपावकाम् । ददर्श भरतस्तत्र पुण्यां रामनिवेशने ॥२४॥

Wailing as aforesaid, the celebrated Bharata (son of Daśaratha) beheld in that forest a large and holy hut of leafy twigs pleasing to the mind and thatched with abundant leaves of sal, palmyra and Aśwakarṇa trees, and (thus) appearing (from a distance) like an extensive altar softly overspread with blades of Kuśa grass in a sacrificial performance. (18-19) The hut was adorned with very strong bows plated with gold at the back and shining like rainbows, nay, instrumental in accomplishing great deeds and capable of harassing the enemy. (20) It was (further) graced with fearful arrows encased in quivers and shining like sunbeams, in the same way as Bhogavatī (the realm of Nāgas) is graced by serpents with incandescent hoods. (21) The hut was (also) decked with a couple of swords encased in sheaths of gold and further adorned with two shields emblazoned with flowers of gold. (22) Distinguished by gloves of iguana skin decked with excellent gold and suspended on walls, the hut was unassailable by hordes of enemies even as the lair of a lion is incapable of being assailed by deer. (23) In that habitat of Śrī Rāma Bharata (also) beheld a spacious holy altar inclining towards the south-east and with a lighted fire placed on it. (24)

निरीक्ष्य स मुहूर्तं तु ददर्श भरतो गुरुम् । उटजे राममासीनं जटामण्डलधारिणम् ॥२५॥
कृष्णाजिनधरं तं तु चीरवल्कलवाससम् । ददर्श राममासीनमभितः पावकोपमम् ॥२६॥
सिंहस्कन्धं महाबाहुं पुण्डरीकनिभेक्षणम् । पृथिव्याः सागरान्ताया भर्तारं धर्मचारिणम् ॥२७॥
उपविष्टं महाबाहुं ब्रह्माणमिव शाश्वतम् । स्थण्डिले दर्भसंस्तीर्णे सीतया लक्ष्मणेन च ॥२८॥
तं दृष्ट्वा भरतः श्रीमाञ्शोकमोहपरिप्लुतः । अभ्यधावत धर्मात्मा भरतः कैकयीसुतः ॥२९॥
दृष्ट्वैव विललापार्तो बाष्पसंदिग्धया गिरा । अशक्नुवन् वारयितुं धैर्याद् वचनमब्रुवन् ॥३०॥

Fixing his gaze awhile Bharata for his part descried his elder brother, Śrī Rāma, seated in the hut wearing a rounded mass of matted hair (on his head). (25) He saw the said Śrī Rāma wearing the skin of a black buck and clad in a strip of bark and resembling a fire (in brilliance), seated close by. (26) He saw the mighty-armed Śrī Rāma, the protector of the earth extending up to the ocean, who had shoulders resembling a lion's and eyes resembling a pair of lotuses and was given to the practice of virtue, seated like the eternal Brahmā (the creator) on a levelled and squared piece of ground strewn with blades of (the sacred) Kuśa grass, along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. (27-28) Overwhelmed with agony and infatuation, the glorious Bharata, son of Kaikeyī, whose mind was given to piety, rushed towards him on seeing him. (29) Distressed at his very sight, he wailed as follows in a voice choked with tears, unable as he was to restrain his agony through firmness and failing to utter articulate words:—(30)

यः संसदि प्रकृतिभिर्भवेद् युक्त उपासितुम् । वन्यैर्मृगैरुपासीनः सोऽयमास्ते ममाग्रजः ॥३१॥
वासोभिर्बहुसाहस्रैर्यो महात्मा पुरोचितः । मृगाजिने सोऽयमिह प्रवस्ते धर्ममाचरन् ॥३२॥
अधारयद् यो विविधाश्चित्राः सुमनसः सदा । सोऽयं जटाभारमिमं सहते राघवः कथम् ॥३३॥
यस्य यज्ञैर्यथादिष्टैर्युक्तो धर्मस्य संचयः । शरीरक्लेशसम्भूतं स धर्मं परिमार्गते ॥३४॥

चन्दनेन महार्हेण यस्याङ्गमुपसेवितम् । मलेन तस्याङ्गमिदं कथमार्यस्य सेव्यते ॥३५॥
मन्निमित्तमिदं दुःखं प्राप्तो रामः सुखोचितः । धिग्जीवितं नृशंसस्य मम लोकविगर्हितम् ॥३६॥

"Here is that very elder brother of mine sitting in the company of wild deer, who deserves to be attended upon by ministers in a royal assembly. (31) The same exalted soul who was used to wearing clothes worth many thousands in the city (of Ayodhya) puts on in this forest today pieces of deerskin (one about his loins and the other as an upper garment), discharging his sacred obligation (towards his father). (32) How does the selfsame Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) who ever adorned his head with beautiful flowers of every description endure now this burden of matted locks (on his head) ? (33) He who deserved to acquire merit through sacrificial performances undertaken as enjoined (by the scriptures) is striving after merit earned through mortification of the flesh ! (34) How is this person of my celebrated elder brother, which used to be adorned with sandal-paste of great value is (now) covered with dirt ? (35) Śrī Rāma, who deserves (all kinds of) comforts, has met with this misfortune on my account. Woe to my life, condemned by the world, cruel as I am." (36)

इत्येवं विलपन् दीनः प्रस्विन्नमुखपङ्कजः । पादावप्राप्य रामस्य पपात भरतो रुदन् ॥३७॥
दुःखाभितप्तो भरतो राजपुत्रो महाबलः । उक्त्वाऽऽर्येति सकृद् दीनं पुनर्नोवाच किंचन ॥३८॥
बाष्पैः पिहितकण्ठश्च प्रेक्ष्य रामं यशस्विनम् । आर्येत्येवाभिसंक्रुश्य व्याहर्तुं नाशकत् ततः ॥३९॥
शत्रुघ्नश्चापि रामस्य ववन्दे चरणौ रुदन् । तावुभौ च समालिङ्ग्य रामोऽप्यश्रूण्यवर्तयत् ॥४०॥
ततः सुमन्त्रेण गुहेन चैव समीयतू राजसुतावरण्ये ।
दिवाकरश्चैव निशाकरश्च यथाम्बरे शुक्रबृहस्पतिभ्याम् ॥४१॥
तान् पार्थिवान् वारणयूथपार्हान् समागतांस्तत्र महत्यरण्ये ।
वनौकसस्तेऽभिसमीक्ष्य सर्वे त्वश्रूण्यमुञ्चन् प्रविहाय हर्षम् ॥४२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे नवनवतितमः सर्गः ॥ ९९ ॥

Loudly wailing as aforesaid, Bharata, who was feeling miserable, his lotus-like countenance covered with perspiration, fell down crying, unable as he was to place his hands on the feet of Śrī Rāma. (37) Pitifully saying "O worshipful brother !" (but) once, the very mighty prince Bharata, tormented as he was with agony, said nothing further. (38). Nay, crying at the top of his voice "My noble brother !" only, on perceiving the illustrious Śrī Rāma, he could not speak further, his throat choked with tears. (39) Shedding tears Śatrughna as well bowed down at the feet of Śrī Rāma. And closely embracing them both Śrī Rāma too began dropping tears. (40) The two princes (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) then embraced Sumantra as well as Guha in the forest, (even) as the Sun and the Moon conjoin with Venus and Jupiter in the heavens. (41) Perceiving the aforesaid princes, who deserved to ride on lordly elephants (*lit.*, the leaders of herds of elephants), come together in that forest, all those dwellers in forests for their part began to shed tears totally giving up joy (born of his blessed sight). (42)

Thus ends Canto Ninety-nine in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

शततमः सर्गः

Canto C

Placing Bharata on his lap, Śrī Rāma gives him instruction in judicature under the pretext of inquiring after the welfare of his father and others.

जटिलं चीरवसनं प्राञ्जलिं पतितं भुवि । ददर्श रामो दुर्दर्शं युगान्ते भास्करं यथा ॥ १ ॥
कथंचिदभिविज्ञाय विवर्णवदनं कृशम् । भ्रातरं भरतं रामः परिजग्राह पाणिना ॥ २ ॥
आघ्राय रामस्तं मूर्ध्नि परिष्वज्य च राघवम् । अङ्के भरतमारोप्य पर्यपृच्छत सादरम् ॥ ३ ॥
क्व नु तेऽभूत् पिता तात यदरण्यं त्वमागतः । न हि त्वं जीवतस्तस्य वनमागन्तुमर्हसि ॥ ४ ॥
चिरस्य बत पश्यामि दूराद् भरतमागतम् । दुष्प्रतीकमरण्येऽस्मिन् किं तात वनमागतः ॥ ५ ॥
कच्चिन्नु धरते तात राजा यत् त्वमिहागतः । कच्चिन्न दीनः सहसा राजा लोकान्तरं गतः ॥ ६ ॥
कच्चित् सौम्य न ते राज्यं भ्रष्टं बालस्य शाश्वतम् । कच्चिच्छुश्रूषसे तात पितुः सत्यपराक्रम ॥ ७ ॥

Śrī Rāma beheld Bharata fallen on the ground with joined palms, wearing matted locks (on his head), clad in bark and (as such) painful to the sight like the sun at the time of universal destruction (coming at the end of a cycle). (1) Anyhow recognizing his (younger) brother, Bharata, pale-faced and emaciated (as he was), Śrī Rāma lifted him up with his hand. (2) Smelling the head of Bharata (as a token of affection) and embracing the scion of Raghu (nay) placing him on his lap, Śrī Rāma tenderly questioned him (as follows):—(3) "Where I wonder has your father gone, my darling, that you have come (all the way) to the forest (leaving him alone)? So long as he is alive you ought not to have come to the forest under any circumstances. (4) I am glad I behold after a long time Bharata, though difficult to recognize (because of his pale countenance and emaciated limbs), come to this forest from a distant land (the home of his maternal grandfather). How have you come to the forest, my darling? (5) Does the king (our father), survive, I ask you, that you have come to this place? I hope the miserable king has not departed to the other world all of a sudden. (6) I hope, O gentle brother, your sovereignty, which has come down from eternity, has not been lost, immature as you are? Are you rendering service to our father, my darling of unfailing prowess? (7)

कच्चिद् दशरथो राजा कुशली सत्यसंगरः । राजसूयाश्वमेधानामाहर्ता धर्मनिश्चितः ॥ ८ ॥
स कच्चिद् ब्राह्मणो विद्वान् धर्मनित्यो महाद्युतिः । इक्ष्वाकूणामुपाध्यायो यथावत् तात पूज्यते ॥ ९ ॥
तात कच्चिच्च कौसल्या सुमित्रा च प्रजावती । सुखिनी कच्चिदार्या च देवी नन्दति कैकयी ॥१०॥
कच्चिद् विनयसम्पन्नः कुलपुत्रो बहुश्रुतः । अनसूयुरनुद्रष्टा सत्कृतस्ते पुरोहितः ॥११॥
कच्चिदग्निषु ते युक्तो विधिज्ञो मतिमानृजुः । हुतं च होष्यमाणं च काले वेदयते सदा ॥१२॥
कच्चिद् देवान् पितॄन् भृत्यान् गुरून् पितृसमानपि । वृद्धांश्च तात वैद्यांश्च ब्राह्मणांश्चाभिमन्यसे ॥१३॥
। सुधन्वानमुपाध्यायं कच्चित् त्वं तात मन्यसे ॥१४॥
इष्वस्त्रवरसम्पन्नमर्थशास्त्रविशारदम्

"Is King Daśaratha (our father),—who is true to his promise and has performed a number of Rājasūya and Aśwamedha sacrifices, and who is resolute upon righteousness,—enjoying good health? (8) Is the celebrated Vasiṣṭha (the preceptor of the Ikṣwākus),—who has realized Brahma (or is a mind-born son of Brahmā), is learned (in all the branches of knowledge), ever devoted to virtue and possessed of great splendour,—duly honoured (by you), my darling ? (9) Is Kausalyā as well as Sumitrā, who is blessed with good progeny, happy ? I hope the glorious mother Kaikeyī too is rejoicing (because of my exile and Your ascension to the throne of Ayodhya). (10) Is your (personal) priest (a son of Vasiṣṭha),—who is rich in humility, born of a noble pedigree, a man of extensive learning, free from spite and skilled in all pious and sacred rites,—treated with honour (by you) ? (11) Does the priest employed by you to look after the sacred fires, who is well-versed in the procedure of conducting sacrificial performances, is endowed with intelligence and guileless of disposition, invariably inform you in time about a sacred fire having (already) been or going to be fed with oblations ? (12) Do you hold in high esteem gods and manes, dependants, elders, kinsmen of your father's age, the aged, the physicians as well as the Brahmans, my darling ? (13) Do you respect Sudhanvā, your teacher (of the science of archery), who is equipped with knowledge relating to the use of excellent arrows (discharged without uttering spells) and missiles (propelled with the utterance of spells) and well-versed in political economy ? (14)

कच्चिदात्मसमाः शूराः श्रुतवन्तो जितेन्द्रियाः । कुलीनाश्चेङ्गितज्ञाश्च कृतास्ते तात मन्त्रिणः ॥१५॥
मन्त्रो विजयमूलं हि राज्ञां भवति राघव । सुसंवृतो मन्त्रिधुरैरमात्यैः शास्त्रकोविदैः ॥१६॥
कच्चिन्निद्रावशं नैषि कच्चित् कालेऽवबुध्यसे । कच्चिच्चापररात्रेषु चिन्तयस्यर्थनैपुणम् ॥१७॥
कच्चिन्मन्त्रयसे नैकः कच्चिन्न बहुभिः सह । कच्चित् ते मन्त्रितो मन्त्रो राष्ट्रं न परिधावति ॥१८॥
कच्चिदर्थं विनिश्चित्य लघुमूलं महोदयम् । क्षिप्रमारभसे कर्म न दीर्घयसि राघव ॥१९॥
कच्चिन्नु सुकृतान्येव कृतरूपाणि वा पुनः । विदुस्ते सर्वकार्याणि न कर्तव्यानि पार्थिवाः ॥२०॥
कच्चिन्न तर्कैर्युक्त्या वा ये चाप्यपरिकीर्तिताः । त्वया वा तव वामात्यैर्बुध्यते तात मन्त्रितम् ॥२१॥

"I hope counsellors who are valiant like you and full of learning, have controlled their senses, are born of a high pedigree and know the meaning of signs, have been secured by you, my darling ! (15) A secret well-guarded by ministers who are the foremost counsellors and well-versed in politics is the root of victory of kings, O scion of Raghu ! (16) I hope you do not fall a prey to excess of sleep and wake betimes. And do you contemplate during the late hours of the night on the methods of acquiring wealth ? (17) I hope you do not deliberate alone (without consulting anyone) nor do you take counsel with many. I hope the decision arrived at by you through deliberation (with your counsellors) does not reach the public (before it is carried out). (18) I hope, considering your interest fully, you launch an enterprise betimes with a modest beginning but pregnant with great potentialities, and do not defer it, O scion of Raghu ? (19) I hope your vassals actually know of all your projects only when they have been duly carried out or at least well-nigh carried out and not so long as they are yet to be carried out. (20) I hope your deliberations which have not been proclaimed are not known (by others) through surmises or reasoning and the deliberations of others are known (before they materialize) by yourself or by your ministers. (21)

कच्चित सहस्रैर्मूर्खाणामेकमिच्छसि पण्डितम् । पण्डितो ह्यर्थकृच्छ्रेषु कुर्यान्निःश्रेयसं महत् ॥२२॥
सहस्राण्यपि मूर्खाणां यद्युपास्ते महीपतिः । अथवाप्ययुतान्येव नास्ति तेषु सहायता ॥२३॥
एकोऽप्यमात्यो मेधावी शूरो दक्षो विचक्षणः । राजानं राजपुत्रं वा प्रापयेन्महतीं श्रियम् ॥२४॥
कच्चिन्मुख्या महत्स्वेव मध्यमेषु च मध्यमाः । जघन्याश्च जघन्येषु भृत्यास्ते तात योजिताः ॥२५॥
अमात्यानुपधातीतान् पितृपैतामहाञ्शुचीन् । श्रेष्ठाञ्छ्रेष्ठेषु कच्चित् त्वं नियोजयसि कर्मसु ॥२६॥
कच्चिन्नोग्रेण दण्डेन भृशमुद्वेजिताः प्रजाः । राष्ट्रे तवावजानन्ति मन्त्रिणः कैकयीसुत ॥२७॥
कच्चित् त्वां नावजानन्ति याजकाः पतितं यथा । उग्राप्रतिग्रहीतारं कामयानमिव स्त्रियः ॥२८॥

"I hope you prefer one learned man to thousands of fools inasmuch as a learned man is calculated to do immense good in financial crises. (22) If a king maintains even thousands or even tens of thousands of fools, no assistance can be expected from them (in times of need). (23) Even one minister who is talented, valiant, clever and well-versed in politics can bring a large fortune to a king or prince. (24) I hope high-class servants are entrusted by you with important duties, middling ones with second-rate affairs and third-grade servants with menial duties, my darling! (25) I hope you entrust first-rate ministers, who are past (all) tests (of loyalty), are hereditary servants of the crown and honest, with the highest duties. (26) I hope, sore agitated by stern rule the people in your state do not show disrespect to your ministers, O son of Kaikeyī? (27) I hope priests conducting sacrifices for the benefit of others do not disregard you (by refusing to officiate at your sacrifices) as they would a fallen man or (even) as matrons would despise their (own) husband who had taken to wife a lowborn woman and was (excessively) fond of her. (28)

उपायकुशलं वैद्यं भृत्यं संदूषणे रतम् । शूरमैश्वर्यकामं च यो हन्ति न स हन्यते ॥२९॥
कच्चिद् धृष्टश्च शूरश्च धृतिमान् मतिमाञ्छुचिः । कुलीनश्चानुरक्तश्च दक्षः सेनापतिः कृतः ॥३०॥
बलवन्तश्च कच्चित् ते मुख्या युद्धविशारदाः । दृष्टापदाना विक्रान्तास्त्वया सत्कृत्य मानिताः ॥३१॥
कच्चिद् बलस्य भक्तं च वेतनं च यथोचितम् । सम्प्राप्तकालं दातव्यं ददासि न विलम्बसे ॥३२॥
कालातिक्रमणे ह्येव भक्तवेतनयोर्भृताः । भर्तुरप्यतिकुप्यन्ति सोऽनर्थः सुमहान् कृतः ॥३३॥
कच्चित् सर्वेऽनुरक्तास्त्वां कुलपुत्राः प्रधानतः । कच्चित् प्राणांस्तवार्थेषु संत्यजन्ति समाहिताः ॥३४॥
कच्चिज्जानपदो विद्वान् दक्षिणः प्रतिभानवान् । यथोक्तवादी दूतस्ते कृतो भरत पण्डितः ॥३५॥

"He who does not get rid of a physician adept in devices of aggravating a malady, a servant intent on bringing disgrace (to his master) and a gallant warrior seeking kingly power is (himself) killed (by these). (29) I hope a man who is (ever) pleased and full of resolution, gallant and talented, spotless (of character) and well-born, devoted and clever, has been appointed (by you) as the generalissimo? (30) Have the foremost of your heroic warriors, who are possessed of might and skilled in warfare, and whose prowess has been witnessed (on the field of battle), been treated with honour by you after being politely received? (31) I hope you distribute (daily) provisions and disburse the (monthly) salary due to them at the opportune time in a suitable manner and do not defer their payment. (32) Salaried servants surely and positively get enraged even at their master when the distribution of their provisions and the disbursal of their salary are delayed and that (itself) is a very great harm done (to the State). (33) I hope all the principal members of your race (the Kṣatriyas) are devoted to you? (And) do they devoutly and cheerfully lay down their lives for your sake? (34) Has a man of your own state, who is learned, clever, ready-witted and capable of delivering messages correctly, nay, who is able to distinguish between right and wrong been appointed by you as an ambassador, O Bharata? (35)

कच्चिदष्टादशान्येषु स्वपक्षे दश पञ्च च । त्रिभिस्त्रिभिरविज्ञातैर्वेत्सि तीर्थानि चारकैः ॥३६॥
कच्चिद् व्यपास्तानहितान् प्रतियातांश्च सर्वदा । दुर्बलाननवज्ञाय वर्तसे रिपुसूदन ॥३७॥
कच्चिन्न लौकायतिकान् ब्राह्मणांस्तात सेवसे । अनर्थकुशला ह्येते बालाः पण्डितमानिनः ॥३८॥
धर्मशास्त्रेषु मुख्येषु विद्यमानेषु दुर्बुधाः । बुद्धिमान्वीक्षिकीं प्राप्य निरर्थं प्रवदन्ति ते ॥३९॥
वीरैरध्युषितां पूर्वमस्माकं तात पूर्वकैः । सत्यनामां दृढद्वारां हस्त्यश्वरथसंकुलाम् ॥४०॥
ब्राह्मणैः क्षत्रियैर्वैश्यैः स्वकर्मनिरतैः सदा । जितेन्द्रियैर्महोत्साहैर्वृतामार्यैः सहस्रशः ॥४१॥
प्रासादैर्विविधाकारैर्वृतां वैद्यजनाकुलाम् । कच्चित् समुदितां स्फीतामयोध्यां परिरक्षसे ॥४२॥

"Do you keep an eye on the eighteen functionaries* of the enemies and the fifteen functionaries of your own side through three unknown spies told off for each? (36) I hope you remain ever mindful of your enemies expelled (from their home by you) and since returned, even though they are (apparently) weak, O destroyer of foes! (37) I hope you do not patronize atheistic Brahmans, O dear brother; for, ignorant and conceited as they are, they are skilled (only) in perverting the mind (and thereby diverting people from the righteous path). (38) Banking (solely) on their logical acumen, these men of perverted intellect preach nonsense (even) in the presence of foremost books on Dharma (piety). (39) I hope you protect on all sides the prosperous (city of) Ayodhya, rightly so called (because of its being unassailable), which has been occupied (in the past), O dear brother, by our heroic forbears, which is provided with strong gates and remains crowded with elephants, horses and chariots, which is inhabited in thousands by noble Brahmans

---

* They are:—(1) the chief minister, (2) the king's family priest, (3) the crown prince, (4) the generalissimo, (5) the chief warder. (6) the chamberlain (अन्तःपुराध्यक्ष), (7) the superintendent of jails (कारागाराध्यक्ष), (8) the chancellor of the exchequer (धनाध्यक्ष), (9) the herald (राजराजाज्ञया आज्ञाप्येषु वक्ता), (10) the government advocate (प्राड्विवाकसंज्ञो व्यवहारप्रष्टा), (11) the judge (धर्मासनाधिकृतः), (12) the assessor (व्यवहारनिर्णेता सभ्याख्यः), (13) the officer disbursing salaries to army men (सेनाया जीवनभृतिदानाध्यक्षः), (14) the officer drawing money from the state exchequer to disburse the workmen's wages (कर्मान्ते वेतनग्राही), (15) the city Kotwal (नगररक्षकः), (16) the protector of the borders of a kingdom, who also performed the duties of a forester (राष्ट्रान्तःपालकः अयमेवाटविकः), (17) the magistrate (दुष्टानां दण्डनाधिकारी), and (18) the officer entrusted with the conservation of waters, hills, forests and tracts difficult of access (जलगिरिवनदुर्गस्थलपालः). Another commentator interprets धनाध्यक्षः to mean a revenue collector (अर्थसंचयकृत्) and सभ्यः to mean an officer who kept the council chamber in good order, allotted seats to the councillors according to their rank of precedence, maintained order among the councillors and looked to the personal safety of the councillors while they were holding their deliberations. The fifteen functionaries of one's own side are the last fifteen of this very list, omitting the first three, *viz*, the chief minister, the family priest and the crown prince.

(members of the priestly class), Kṣatriyas (members of the warrior class) and Vaiśyas (members of the agriculturist and trading classes),—who are ever devoted to their (respective) duties, have subdued their senses and are full of great zeal,—nay, which is crowded with palatial buildings of various patterns and is thronged with learned men and full of highly contented people. (40—42)

कच्चिच्चैत्यशतैर्जुष्टः सुनिविष्टजनाकुलः । देवस्थानैः प्रपाभिश्च तटाकैश्चोपशोभितः ॥४३॥
प्रहृष्टनरनारीकः समाजोत्सवशोभितः । सुकृष्टसीमा पशुमान् हिंसाभिरभिवर्जितः ॥४४॥
अदेवमातृको रम्यः श्वापदैः परिवर्जितः । परित्यक्तो भयैः सर्वैः खनिभिश्चोपशोभितः ॥४५॥
विवर्जितो नरैः पापैर्मम पूर्वैः सुरक्षितः । कच्चिज्जनपदः स्फीतः सुखं वसति राघव ॥४६॥
कच्चित् ते दयिताः सर्वे कृषिगोरक्षजीविनः । वार्तायां साम्प्रतं तात लोकोऽयं सुखमेधते ॥४७॥
तेषां गुप्तिपरीहारैः कच्चित् ते भरणं कृतम् । रक्ष्या हि राज्ञा धर्मेण सर्वे विषयवासिनः ॥४८॥
कच्चित् स्त्रियः सान्त्वयसे कच्चित् तास्ते सुरक्षिताः । कच्चिन्न श्रद्दधास्यासां कच्चिद् गुह्यं न भाषसे ॥४९॥

"I hope the kingdom (of Ayodhya),—which is overspread with hundreds of altars (constructed for sacrificial performances) and crowded with well-established men, which is adorned with temples, sheds where water is stocked for free distribution to passers-by and tanks, and peopled with highly delighted men and women, which is graced by social festivities and is full of well-cultivated fields and abounds in cattle, which is totally free from violence and does not depend (exclusively) on rains (for its agricultural products), which is charming (in point of topography) and is purged of beasts of prey, which is completely rid of all fears and is studded with mines, (nay) which is destitute of sinful men and was well-protected by our forbears,—is prosperous and faring well, O scion of Raghu ! (43—46) I hope the Vaiśyas (who live by agriculture and rearing the bovine race) are all loved by you. Are these people, depending as they do on the vocation of a Vaiśya (*viz*, trade, agriculture and breeding of cattle) thriving well at present, O dear brother ? (47) I hope protection has been afforded by you to them by making available to them the objects desired by them and warding off evil; for all the inhabitants of one's land deserve to be protected righteously by a king. (48) Do you keep your womenfolk pacified ? Are they duly protected by you ? I hope you do not repose excessive faith in them and do not confide your secrets to them. (49)

कच्चिन्नागवनं गुप्तं कच्चित् ते सन्ति धेनुकाः । कच्चिन्न गणिकाश्वानां कुञ्जराणां च तृप्यसि ॥५०॥
कच्चिद् दर्शयसे नित्यं मानुषाणां विभूषितम् । उत्थायोत्थाय पूर्वाह्णे राजपुत्र महापथे ॥५१॥
कच्चिन्न सर्वे कर्मान्ताः प्रत्यक्षास्तेऽविशङ्कया । सर्वे वा पुनरुत्सृष्टा मध्यमेवात्र कारणम् ॥५२॥
कच्चिद् दुर्गाणि सर्वाणि धनधान्यायुधोदकैः । यन्त्रैश्च प्रतिपूर्णानि तथा शिल्पिधनुर्धरैः ॥५३॥
आयस्ते विपुलः कच्चित् कच्चिदल्पतरो व्ययः । अपात्रेषु न ते कच्चित् कोशो गच्छति राघव ॥५४॥
देवतार्थे च पित्रर्थे ब्राह्मणाभ्यागतेषु च । योधेषु मित्रवर्गेषु कच्चिद् गच्छति ते व्ययः ॥५५॥
कच्चिदार्योऽपि शुद्धात्माऽऽक्षारितश्चापकर्मणा । अदृष्टः शास्त्रकुशलैर्न लोभाद् बध्यते शुचिः ॥५६॥

"Are the forests which are the home of elephants preserved by you ? Are milch cows in abundance with you ? I hope you do not feel satisfied with the (existing) number of female elephants, horses and elephants (owned by you). (50) Getting up regularly every day do you show yourself well-adorned to the people in the assembly hall in the forenoon, O prince ? (51) I hope all your workmen do not appear unhesitatingly before you nor are they kept (altogether) out of your sight. (In fact) a middle course is undoubtedly profitable in this behalf. (52) Are all your fortifications fully supplied with wealth and provisions, arms and water, mechanical contrivances and equipped with artisans and bowmen? (53) Is your income (sufficiently) large (to meet your expenses) and your expenditure comparatively less? I hope your wealth does not go to undeserving men, O scion of Raghu! (54) I (further) hope your wealth is expended (exclusively) in the cause of gods and manes as well as over the Brahmans and unexpected visitors, warriors and hosts of friends. (55) I hope no pious soul, who is pure of mind and sinless, is convicted from greed, when charged with some offence, though not found guilty by those well-versed in law-books. (56)

गृहीतश्चैव पृष्टश्च काले दृष्टः सकारणः । कच्चिन्न मुच्यते चोरो धनलोभान्नरर्षभ ॥५७॥
व्यसने कच्चिदाढ्यस्य दुर्बलस्य च राघव । अर्थं विरागाः पश्यन्ति तवामात्या बहुश्रुताः ॥५८॥
यानि मिथ्याभिशस्तानां पतन्त्यश्रूणि राघव । तानि पुत्रपशून् घ्नन्ति प्रीत्यर्थमनुशासतः ॥५९॥
कच्चिद् वृद्धांश्च बालांश्च वैद्यान् मुख्यांश्च राघव । दानेन मनसा वाचा त्रिभिरेतैर्बुभूषसे ॥६०॥
कच्चिद् गुरूंश्च वृद्धांश्च तापसान् देवतातिथीन् । चैत्यांश्च सर्वान् सिद्धार्थान् ब्राह्मणांश्च नमस्यसि ॥६१॥
कच्चिदर्थेन वा धर्ममर्थं धर्मेण वा पुनः । उभौ वा प्रीतिलोभेन कामेन न विबाधसे ॥६२॥
कच्चिदर्थं च कामं च धर्मं च जयतां वर । विभज्य काले कालज्ञ सर्वान् वरद सेवसे ॥६३॥

"I hope no thief who has been detected at the time of theft and apprehended on sufficient ground and also questioned (and found guilty) is released from greed of wealth, O jewel among men! (57) In an unhappy contention between an affluent and a (financially) feeble man, O scion of Raghu, do your ministers of vast learning judge the case impartially? (58) The tears that drop from the eyes of men falsely convicted, O scion of Raghu, destroy the sons and cattle of a king who rules the people (merely) for the sake of pleasure (caring little for equity and justice). (59) Do you seek, O scion of Raghu, to win over the elders, children and foremost physicians by the following three means, *viz*, gifts, a loving mind and polite words? (60) Do you greet your teachers and elders, ascetics, deities and unexpected visitors as well as all the trees standing at cross roads (and believed to be the abode of gods) and Brahmans who have achieved the object of their life (through their learning, character and austerities)? (61) I hope you do not cause interruption in your religious practices by your (excessive) devotion to wealth (and devoting the morning hours and forenoon to the pursuit of wealth and other secular interests) nor do you mar your earthly interests by your over-emphasis on religion (and allowing your religious duties to encroach upon the midday hours and afternoon reserved for the pursuit of wealth and other secular interests) nor do you mar both your religious and secular interests by your self-indulgence in the form of avidity for gratification of the senses. (62) Do you pursue all the (three) objects of human pursuit, *viz*, wealth and the delights of sense and religion (only during the hours allotted to each),* O bestower of boons, dividing them according to time, O jewel among the victorious, knowing as you do the time appropriate for each? (63)

---

* Our Smṛti texts enjoin the pursuit of religion during the morning hours and forenoon, the pursuit of wealth during the daytime and the pursuit of pleasure during the first quarter of the night.

कच्चित् ते ब्राह्मणाः शर्म सर्वशास्त्रार्थकोविदाः । आशंसन्ते महाप्राज्ञ पौरजानपदैः सह ॥६४॥
नास्तिक्यमनृतं क्रोधं प्रमादं दीर्घसूत्रताम् । अदर्शनं ज्ञानवतामालस्यं पञ्चवृत्तिताम् ॥६५॥
एकचिन्तनमर्थानामनर्थज्ञैश्च मन्त्रणम् । निश्चितानामनारम्भं मन्त्रस्यापरिरक्षणम् ॥६६॥
मङ्गलाद्यप्रयोगं च प्रत्युत्थान च सर्वतः । कच्चित् त्वं वर्जयस्येतान् राजदोषांश्चतुर्दश ॥६७॥
दशपञ्चचतुर्वर्गान् सप्तवर्गं च तत्त्वतः । अष्टवर्गं त्रिवर्गं च विद्यास्तिस्रश्च राघव ॥६८॥
इन्द्रियाणां जयं बुद्ध्वा षाड्गुण्यं दैवमानुषम् । कृत्यं विंशतिवर्गं च तथा प्रकृतिमण्डलम् ॥६९॥
यात्रा दण्डविधानं च द्वियोनी संधिविग्रहौ । कच्चिदेतान् महाप्राज्ञ यथावदनुमन्यसे ॥७०॥

"Do the Brahmans that have thoroughly grasped the meaning of all the scriptures pray for your welfare along with the citizens (of Ayodhya) and the people of the countryside, O exceptionally wise prince ? (64) Do you abjure the following fourteen failings of kings, *viz*, disbelief in the other world, mendacity (through greed etc.), anger, neglect of kingly duties, procrastination, shunning the wise, sloth, thraldom of the five (senses), devoting thought to the affairs of the State without seeking the advice of others (ministers etc.), taking counsel with those of perverted insight, failure to launch projects (already) decided upon, failure to keep secrets, failure to utter auspicious words at the beginning of every undertaking and rising from one's seat (indiscriminately) to receive all (who happen to approach him) ? (65-67) I hope you deal properly after knowing them in reality with the (well-known) ten evils (born of concupiscence), the five kinds of fortifications, the four expedients (recommended for kings), the seven (important) limbs of a state, the eight evils (born of anger) or the eight measures (conducive to the welfare of a state), the three (worldly) objects of human pursuit (*viz*, religious merit, material wealth and sensuous enjoyment) or the three kinds of power (*viz*, energy or उत्साहशक्ति, the power of dominion or प्रभुशक्ति and the power of counsel or मन्त्रशक्ति), the three branches of learning (*viz*, the three Vedas or त्रयी, the knowledge relating to agriculture, commerce and other vocational pursuits or वार्ता and political science or दण्डनीति), subjugation of the senses, the six strategic expedients (*viz*, coming to terms with the enemy—संधि, waging war against him—विग्रह, marching against him—यानम्, biding one's time to seek a favourable opportunity—आसनम्, causing dissension in the enemy's ranks—द्वैधम् and seeking the protection of a powerful ally—आश्रय[1]; adversity brought about by divine agencies (such as fire, water in the shape of excessive rains or floods, epidemic or endemic diseases, famine and pestilence) and by human agencies (such as officials, thieves, enemies, a king's favourites and the king himself when actuated by greed)[2]; the (stern) duty of a king (as dictated by policy, such as to win over enemy's men whose emoluments have been withheld, who are greedy or haughty, who have suffered indignity at his hands, who are irate or have been provoked by him for no reason, who are

---

[1] संधिर्ना विग्रहो यानमासनं द्वैधमाश्रयः ।

[2] हुताशनो जलं व्याधिर्दुर्भिक्षो मरकस्तथा । इत्येतद्दैवम् । मानुषं तु—
आयुक्तकेभ्यश्चोरेभ्यः परेभ्यो राजवल्लभात् । पृथ्वीपतिलोभाच्च व्यसनं मानुषं त्विदम् ॥

afraid or have been intimidated)[3]; (the following) twenty types of monarchs (who are not worth negotiating with, *viz*, 1. a king who is yet a child or 2. aged, 3. who has been ailing for a long time, 4. who has been ostracised by his own kith and kin, 5. who is pusillanimous or 6. is surrounded by cowards, 7. who is greedy or 8. has greedy associates, 9. who has estranged his ministers and others, 10. who is extremely voluptuous, 11. who confers with fickle-minded persons, 12. who speaks ill of divine beings and Brahmans, 13. who is ill-fated and 14. a fatalist, 15. who is afflicted by famine and 16. by military reverses, 17. who (mostly) remains away from home, 18. who has numerous enemies, 19. who is in the clutches of adverse times and 20. who is not devoted to truth and piety)[4]; the entire population (of the State); setting forth on an expedition (for conquest against an enemy); drawing up an army in battle-array; coming to terms with an enemy and waging war against him, the first of which serves as a ground for the two policies of duplicity and seeking the protection of a powerful enemy, while the other serves as a ground for the other two policies of marching against the enemy and biding time to seek a favourable opportunity to march against an enemy, O highly intelligent scion of Raghu ! (68—70)

मन्त्रिभिस्त्वं यथोदिष्टं चतुर्भिस्त्रिभिरेव वा । कच्चित् समस्तैर्व्यस्तैश्च मन्त्रं मन्त्रयसे बुध ॥७१॥
कच्चित् ते सफला वेदाः कच्चित् ते सफलाः क्रियाः । कच्चित् ते सफला दाराः कच्चित् ते सफलं श्रुतम्॥७२॥
कच्चिदेषैव ते बुद्धिर्यथोक्ता मम राघव । आयुष्या च यशस्या च धर्मकामार्थसंहिता ॥७३॥
यां वृत्तिं वर्तते तातो यां च नः प्रपितामहः । तां वृत्तिं वर्तसे कच्चिद् या च सत्पथगा शुभा ॥७४॥
कच्चित् स्वादुकृतं भोज्यमेको नाश्नासि राघव । कच्चिदाशंसमानेभ्यो मित्रेभ्यः सम्प्रयच्छसि ॥७५॥
राजा तु धर्मेण हि पालयित्वा महीपतिर्दण्डधरः प्रजानाम् ।
अवाप्य कृत्स्नां वसुधां यथावदितश्च्युतः स्वर्गमुपैति विद्वान् ॥७६॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे शततमः सर्गः ॥ १०० ॥

"Do you hold consultation in accordance with scriptural injunctions with only four or three (selected) counsellors collectively or severally (to guard against a split among them and to prevent the secrets from leaking out), O wise one ? (71) Has your study of the Vedas borne fruit (in the shape of moulding your conduct according to their injunctions) ? Are your undertakings fruitful ? Has your spouse given birth to offspring ? Has your learning borne fruit (in the shape of culture and humility) ? (72) I hope your conclusion is precisely the same as mine, which has been set forth (in the foregoing verses), O scion of Raghu, and which is conducive to longevity and fame and is attended with religious merit, enjoyment and wealth. (73) Do you follow the way of life which our father treads and which our

---

३. अलब्धवेतनो लुब्धो मानी चाप्यवमानितः । क्रुद्धश्च कोपितोऽकस्मात्तथा भीतश्च भीषितः ॥
मेद्याः शत्रौ तु चत्वारो नृपकृत्यमिदं स्मृतम् ।

४. बालो वृद्धो दीर्घरोगी तथा ज्ञातिबहिष्कृतः । भीरुको भीरुजनको लुब्धो लुब्धजनस्तथा ॥
विरक्तप्रकृतिश्चैव विषयेष्वतिसक्तिमान् । अनेकचित्तमन्त्रश्च देवब्राह्मणनिन्दकः ॥
दैवोपहतकश्चैव दैवचिन्तक एव च । दुर्भिक्षव्यसनोपेतो बलव्यसनसंयुतः ॥
अदेशस्थो बहुरिपुर्युक्तोऽकालेन यश्च वै । सत्यधर्मारतश्चैव विंशतिः पुरुषा अमी ॥
एतैः संधिं न कुर्वीत विगृह्णीयात्तु केवलम् ।

forbears trod, nay, which is in accord with the way of the virtuous and which is righteous (in itself)? (74) I hope you do not partake by yourself of food nicely cooked. I hope you offer it to friends who seek it. (75) Having obtained (as his share), and ruled in the right way over, the entire globe, a wise Kṣatriya holds sway over the earth and administering justice to the people quite in consonance with righteousness surely ascends to heaven when detached from this (mortal) body." (76)

Thus ends Canto One hundred in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CI

Questioned as to what made him give up the sovereignty of Ayodhya and enter the forest in the garb of an ascetic, Bharata reproaches his mother and implores his elder brother to accept the kingship and return to Ayodhya. Śrī Rāma, however, pleads that the command of their father is supreme and must be implicitly obeyed by both of them, the first part of it enjoining the exile of the elder brother being binding on him and the second part bequeathing the kingdom to Bharata being binding on the latter.

तं तु रामः समाज्ञाय भ्रातरं गुरुवत्सलम् । लक्ष्मणेन सह भ्रात्रा प्रष्टुं समुपचक्रमे ॥ १ ॥
किमेतदिच्छेयमहं श्रोतुं प्रव्याहृतं त्वया । यस्मात् त्वमागतो देशमिमं चीरजटाजिनी ॥ २ ॥
यन्निमित्तमिमं देशं कृष्णाजिनजटाधरः । हित्वा राज्यं प्रविष्टस्त्वं तत् सर्वं वक्तुमर्हसि ॥ ३ ॥
इत्युक्तः केकयीपुत्रः काकुत्स्थेन महात्मना । प्रगृह्य बलवद् भूयः प्राञ्जलिर्वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥ ४ ॥
आर्यं तातः परित्यज्य कृत्वा कर्म सुदुष्करम् । गतः स्वर्गं महाबाहुः पुत्रशोकाभिपीडितः ॥ ५ ॥
स्त्रिया नियुक्तः कैकेय्या मम मात्रा परंतप । चकार सा महत्पापमिदमात्मयशोहरम् ॥ ६ ॥

Concluding (from his ascetic garb) the aforesaid Bharata to be full of love to himself (his elder brother), Śrī Rāma for his part along with Lakṣmaṇa duly started questioning Bharata (as follows):—(1) "I wish to hear explained by you wherefore it is that you have come (all the way) to this region, clad in the bark of trees and deerskin and wearing matted locks (on your head). (2) What for have you entered this region, wearing the skin of a black buck (on your person) and matted locks (on your head), relinquishing the sovereignty? Please state all this (clearly)." (3) Addressed in the aforesaid words once again by the high-souled Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) closely embracing him, Bharata (the son of Kaikeyī) made the following submission with joined palms:—(4) "Having performed a deed (in the shape of disinheriting and exiling his own eldest son) most difficult to perform, as urged by his (favourite) spouse and my mother, Kaikeyī, and abandoning us (all), our mighty-armed father ascended to heaven, sore stricken (as he was) with grief caused by separation from his (most beloved) son, O tormentor of foes ! (In this way) she perpetrated this great sin, that has taken away her own reputation, O noble brother ! (5-6)

सा राज्यफलमप्राप्य विधवा शोककर्शिता । पतिष्यति महाघोरे नरके जननी मम ॥७॥
तस्य मे दासभूतस्य प्रसादं कर्तुमर्हसि । अभिषिञ्चस्व चाद्यैव राज्येन मघवानिव ॥८॥
इमाः प्रकृतयः सर्वा विधवा मातरश्च याः । त्वत्सकाशमनुप्राप्ताः प्रसादं कर्तुमर्हसि ॥९॥
तथानुपूर्व्या युक्तश्च युक्तं चात्मनि मानद । राज्यं प्राप्नुहि धर्मेण सकामान् सुहृदः कुरु ॥१०॥
भवत्वविधवा भूमिः समग्रा पतिना त्वया । शशिना विमलेनेव शारदी रजनी यथा ॥११॥
एभिश्च सचिवैः सार्धं शिरसा याचितो मया । भ्रातुः शिष्यस्य दासस्य प्रसादं कर्तुमर्हसि ॥१२॥
तदिदं शाश्वतं पित्र्यं सर्वं सचिवमण्डलम् । पूजितं पुरुषव्याघ्र नातिक्रमितुमर्हसि ॥१३॥

"Failing to gain the prize in the shape of sovereignty, my widowed mother, emaciated as she is with grief, will descend into a most frightful hell. (7) Be pleased to bestow this favour on me, your notorious slave, and have yourself consecrated like Indra (the ruler of gods) for the kingship (of Ayodhya). (8) You ought to be gracious to these people as well as to my widowed mothers, who have sought your presence (to propitiate you). (9) You are fitted (for sovereignty) by virtue of primogeniture and as such assume (you) the sovereignty, which is your due, conformably with (the principles of) righteousness and (thereby) enable your relations and friends to realize their ambition (of seeing you installed on the throne of Ayodhya) O respecter of others ! (10) With you as its lord, let the entire globe cease to be without a master (even) as an autumnal night ceases to be dismal when united with a bright moon. (11) Solicited by me with bent head in conjunction with these ministers, be pleased to show grace to this servant, who is (at the same time) your younger (half-) brother and pupil. (12) You ought not to disregard (the solicitation of) this entire body of your father's ministers who are not only well-known but have continued through (many past) generations and are adored by you, O tiger among men !" (13)

एवमुक्त्वा महाबाहुः सबाष्पः कैकयीसुतः । रामस्य शिरसा पादौ जग्राह भरतः पुनः ॥१४॥
तं मत्तमिव मातङ्गं निःश्वसन्तं पुनः पुनः । भ्रातरं भरतं रामः परिष्वज्येदमब्रवीत् ॥१५॥
कुलीनः सत्त्वसम्पन्नस्तेजस्वी चरितव्रतः । राज्यहेतोः कथं पापमाचरेन्मद्विधो जनः ॥१६॥
न दोषं त्वयि पश्यामि सूक्ष्ममप्यरिसूदन । न चापि जननीं बाल्यात् त्वं विगर्हितुमर्हसि ॥१७॥
कामकारो महाप्राज्ञ गुरूणां सर्वदानघ । उपपन्नेषु दारेषु पुत्रेषु च विधीयते ॥१८॥
वयमस्य यथा लोके संख्याताः सौम्य साधुभिः । भार्याः पुत्राश्च शिष्याश्च त्वमपि ज्ञातुमर्हसि ॥१९॥
वने वा चीरवसनं सौम्य कृष्णाजिनाम्बरम् । राज्ये वापि महाराजो मां वासयितुमीश्वरः ॥२०॥

Saying so full of tears, the mighty-armed Bharata, son of Kaikeyī, clasped the feet of Śrī Rāma once more, touching them with his head. (14) Embracing his (younger half-) brother, Bharata, who was sighing again and again like an elephant in rut, Śrī Rāma spoke (to him) as follows :—(15) "How can a man of noble descent, rich in Sattva (goodness) and dignified, and who has observed sacred vows like myself, perpetrate a sinful act for the sake of sovereignty ? (16) I do not discover even a minute fault in you, O destroyer of foes ! Nor should you reproach your mother through ignorance. (17) Freedom of action on the part of elders with reference to their esteemed wife and progeny is always permitted (by the scriptures), O sinless and highly intelligent brother. (18) You too should know, O gentle brother, that we are held by holy men to be in the same position in the world with reference to the (deceased) king-emperor as the wives, progeny and pupils of a householder are considered (as amenable to his control). (19) The emperor (King Daśaratha) was perfectly within his rights to lodge me in a forest with the bark of trees wrapped about me and wearing the skin of a black buck about my loins or install me on the throne (of Ayodhya), O gentle brother ! (20)

यावत् पितरि धर्मज्ञ गौरवं लोकसत्कृते । तावद् धर्मकृतां श्रेष्ठ जनन्यामपि गौरवम् ॥२१॥
एताभ्यां धर्मशीलाभ्यां वनं गच्छेति राघव । मातापितृभ्यामुक्तोऽहं कथमन्यत् समाचरे ॥२२॥
त्वया राज्यमयोध्यायां प्राप्तव्यं लोकसत्कृतम् । वस्तव्यं दण्डकारण्ये मया वल्कलवाससा ॥२३॥
एवमुक्त्वा महाराजो विभागं लोकसंनिधौ । व्यादिश्य च महाराजो दिवं दशरथो गतः ॥२४॥
स च प्रमाणं धर्मात्मा राजा लोकगुरुस्तव । पित्रा दत्तं यथा भागमुपभोक्तुं त्वमर्हसि ॥२५॥
चतुर्दश समाः सौम्य दण्डकारण्यमाश्रितः । उपभोक्ष्ये त्वहं दत्तं भागं पित्रा महात्मना ॥२६॥
यदब्रवीन्मां नरलोकसत्कृतः पिता महात्मा विबुधाधिपोपमः ।
तदेव मन्ये परमात्मनो हितं न सर्वलोकेश्वरभावमव्ययम् ॥२७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ १०१ ॥

"The same degree of respect is due even to our mother (Kaikeyī) as is due to our father, who was honoured by the world, O knower of what is right and jewel among those practising virtue ! (21) Commanded by these parents (of mine), who are pious by disposition, in the words 'Proceed to the forest,' O scion of Raghu, how can I do any thing else ? (22) Sovereignty in Ayodhya, respected by the world, should be enjoyed by you, while I must dwell in the Daṇḍaka forest, clad in the bark of trees. (23) Saying so and giving (two) different orders (for us two) in the presence of the people, Emperor Daśaratha ascended to heaven. (24) Nay, that pious-minded king, the adored of the people, is your authority (in this matter). You ought (therefore) to enjoy duly the share allotted (to you) by our high-souled father. (25) Taking up my abode in the Daṇḍaka forest, O gentle brother, I for my part shall enjoy the share allotted (to me) by our high-souled father for fourteen years. (26) I consider that alone to be supremely good for me, which our high-souled father, who is respected by the world of human beings and is a compeer of Indra (the ruler of gods) has enjoined upon me, and not the state of Brahmā (the lord of all the worlds), which knows no decay." (27)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and one in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्व्यधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CII

Bharata tells Śrī Rāma that, having been deprived of the privilege of serving his elder brother, he will have nothing to do with sovereignty and requests him to offer water to the spirit of his deceased father, who died with the thought of Śrī Rāma alone foremost in his mind, and further implores him to get himself consecrated for the sovereignty of Ayodhya, the obsequies of their imperial father having been duly performed by the two brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna) at Ayodhya.

रामस्य वचनं श्रुत्वा भरतः प्रत्युवाच ह । किं मे धर्माद् विहीनस्य राजधर्मः करिष्यति ॥ १ ॥
शाश्वतोऽयं सदा धर्मः स्थितोऽस्मासु नरर्षभ । ज्येष्ठे पुत्रे स्थिते राजा न कनीयान् भवेन्नृपः ॥ २ ॥
स समृद्धां मया सार्धमयोध्यां गच्छ राघव । अभिषेचय चात्मानं कुलस्यास्य भवाय नः ॥ ३ ॥
राजानं मानुषं प्राहुर्देवत्वे सम्मतो मम । यस्य धर्मार्थसहितं वृत्तमाहुरमानुषम् ॥ ४ ॥
केकयस्थे च मयि तु त्वयि चारण्यमाश्रिते । धीमान् स्वर्गं गतो राजा यायजूकः सतां मतः ॥ ५ ॥
निष्क्रान्तमात्रे भवति सहसीते सलक्ष्मणे । दुःखशोकाभिभूतस्तु राजा त्रिदिवमभ्यगात् ॥ ६ ॥

Hearing the exhortation of Śrī Rāma, Bharata, it is said, replied as follows:—"How will the code of conduct prescribed for a king avail me, who stand outside the range of that code (disqualified as I am for sovereignty, being a younger issue of the king-emperor) ? (1) This has ever been the perpetual law amongst us (the Kṣatriyas of the solar dynasty), O jewel among men, that so long as the eldest prince is alive, a younger one can never be a king. (2) Therefore, return with me to the affluent (city of) Ayodhya, O scion of Raghu, and get yourself consecrated (for the kingship) for the continuance of this race of ours. (3) The king, whom (the common) people speak of as a human being and (yet) whose conduct, which goes hand in hand with righteousness and worldly prosperity, they declare as superhuman, is esteemed by me as verging on divinity. (4) While I was away in the kingdom of Kekaya and you had proceeded to the forest, the sagacious king, who was given to the performance of sacrifices and was esteemed by the virtuous, ascended to heaven. (5) Accompanied by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa you had just gone out (of Ayodhya) when overwhelmed with sorrow and grief, the king departed for heaven. (6)

उत्तिष्ठ पुरुषव्याघ्र क्रियतामुदकं पितुः । अहं चायं च शत्रुघ्नः पूर्वमेव कृतोदकौ ॥ ७ ॥
प्रियेण किल दत्तं हि पितृलोकेषु राघव । अक्षयं भवतीत्याहुर्भवांश्चैव पितुः प्रियः ॥ ८ ॥
त्वामेव शोचंस्तव दर्शनेप्सुस्त्वय्येव सक्तामनिवर्त्य बुद्धिम् ।
त्वया विहीनस्तव शोकरुग्णस्त्वां संस्मरन्नेव गतः पिता ते ॥ ९ ॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्व्यधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ १०२ ॥

"Get up, O tiger among men! Let water be offered to (the spirit of our deceased) father. Śatrughna standing here and myself too have already offered water to him. (7) For, the knowers of Truth declare that water etc. offered by a beloved son surely becomes inexhaustible in the realm of manes, O scion of Raghu; and you are undoubtedly the beloved of our (deceased) father. (8) Bereft of you and stricken with grief caused by separation from you and unable to divert his mind, which was solely attached to you alone, our father departed (from this world) grieving only for you, longing for your sight and fondly remembering you alone." (9)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and two in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्र्यधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CIII

Fallen into a swoon to hear of his father's ascent to heaven and brought back to consciousness by Bharata and others, who sprinkle water on him and employ other such devices, Śrī Rāma laments in various ways. Comforted by Bharata and having (in his turn) consoled Sītā and repairing to the bank of the Ganga, nay, offering water and balls of cooked food to the spirit of his departed father, he returns to his hut. Hearing their cry of distress, the troops approach them and are greeted by Śrī Rāma according to their rank.

तां श्रुत्वा करुणां वाचं पितुर्मरणसंहिताम् । राघवो भरतेनोक्तां बभूव गतचेतनः ॥ १ ॥
तं तु वज्रमिवोत्सृष्टमाहवे दानवारिणा । वाग्वज्रं भरतेनोक्तममनोज्ञं परंतपः ॥ २ ॥
प्रगृह्य रामो बाहू वै पुष्पिताङ्ग इव द्रुमः । वने परशुना कृत्तस्तथा भुवि पपात ह ॥ ३ ॥
तथा हि पतितं रामं जगत्यां जगतीपतिम् । कूलघातपरिश्रान्तं प्रसुप्तमिव कुञ्जरम् ॥ ४ ॥
भ्रातरस्ते महेष्वासं सर्वतः शोककर्शितम् । रुदन्तः सह वैदेह्या सिषिचुः सलिलेन वै ॥ ५ ॥
स तु संज्ञां पुनर्लब्ध्वा नेत्राभ्यामश्रुमुत्सृजन् । उपाक्रामत काकुत्स्थः कृपणं बहु भाषितुम् ॥ ६ ॥
स रामः स्वर्गतं श्रुत्वा पितरं पृथिवीपतिम् । उवाच भरतं वाक्यं धर्मात्मा धर्मसंहितम् ॥ ७ ॥

Hearing the pathetic news relating to the death of his father (King Daśaratha) told by Bharata, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), fainted away. (1) Hearing the aforesaid unpleasant and heart-rending news broken by Bharata, which was (piercing) like a thunderbolt discharged by Indra (the enemy of demons) on a field of battle, and raising his arms, Śrī Rāma, the scorcher of his enemies, for his part actually sank to the ground precisely like a tree with boughs full of blossom felled down with an axe in a forest: so it is said. (2-3) Weeping with Sītā (a princess of the Videha territory), his celebrated brothers (Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna) promptly sprinkled all over with water Śrī Rāma, the ruler of the earth and the wielder of a mighty bow, fallen on the ground, as aforesaid, blasted with grief, like an elephant exhausted by striking (with his tusks) against a river bank and lying fast asleep. (4-5) (Shortly) regaining his consciousness, the aforesaid Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha), for his part, began piteously to wail, dropping tears from his eyes. (6) Hearing of the emperor, his father, having ascended to heaven, the celebrated Śrī Rāma, whose mind was given to piety, addressed the following words, consistent with righteousness, to Bharata :—(7)

किं करिष्याम्ययोध्यायां ताते दिष्टां गतिं गते । कस्तां राजवराद्धीनामयोध्यां पालयिष्यति ॥ ८ ॥
किं नु तस्य मया कार्यं दुर्जातेन महात्मनः । यो मृतो मम शोकेन स मया न च संस्कृतः ॥ ९ ॥
अहो भरत सिद्धार्थो येन राजा त्वयानघ । शत्रुघ्नेन च सर्वेषु प्रेतकृत्येषु सत्कृतः ॥१०॥
निष्प्रधानामनेकाग्रां नरेन्द्रेण विना कृताम् । निवृत्तवनवासोऽपि नायोध्यां गन्तुमुत्सहे ॥११॥
समाप्तवनवासं मामयोध्यायां परंतप । कोऽनुशासिष्यति पुनस्ताते लोकान्तरं गते ॥१२॥
पुरा प्रेक्ष्य सुवृत्तं मां पिता यान्याह सान्त्वयन् । वाक्यानि तानि श्रोष्यामि कुतः कर्णसुखान्यहम् ॥१३॥

"Father having reached the end of his life (the destiny assigned by Providence), what shall I do at Ayodhya? Who will look after the said (city of) Ayodhya, bereft of Daśaratha (the foremost of kings)? (8) What purpose on earth of that high-souled monarch,—who died of grief caused by separation from me, and who was not (even) cremated by me,—was served by me, his hapless child? (9) Oh sinless Bharata, accomplished of purpose are you, by whom, as well as by Śatrughna the king was paid homage to in all obsequial rites! (10) Even when the term of my exile has expired, I shall have no courage to return to Ayodhya, which has been rendered destitute of its ruler and is (therefore) without a leader and agitated. (11) Father having departed to the other world, O scorcher of enemies, who will give instructions to me hereafter (about my duty) when I am (back) in Ayodhya having completed the term of my exile in the forest? (12) From whom shall I hear those words, pleasing to the ear, which father addressed to me in the past, speaking kindly to me, on seeing me of good conduct?" (13)

एवमुक्त्वाथ भरतं भार्यामभ्येत्य राघवः । उवाच शोकसंतप्तः पूर्णचन्द्रनिभाननाम् ॥१४॥
सीते मृतस्ते श्वशुरः पितृहीनोऽसि लक्ष्मण । भरतो दुःखमाचष्टे स्वर्गतिं पृथिवीपतेः ॥१५॥

Having spoken to Bharata as aforesaid, and turning to his consort, whose countenance resembled the full moon, (as well as to Lakṣmaṇa), Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who was tormented with grief, said to her :—(14) "Your father-in-law is no more, O Sītā! You are fatherless, O Lakṣmaṇa! Bharata sorrowfully relates the emperor's ascent to heaven." (15)

ततो बहुगुणं तेषां बाष्पं नेत्रेष्वजायत । तथा ब्रुवति काकुत्स्थे कुमाराणां यशस्विनाम् ॥१६॥
ततस्ते भ्रातरः सर्वे भृशमाश्वास्य दुःखितम् । अब्रुवञ्जगतीभर्तुः क्रियतामुदकं पितुः ॥१७॥

सा सीता स्वर्गतं श्रुत्वा श्वशुरं तं महानृपम् । नेत्राभ्यामश्रुपूर्णाभ्यां न शशाकेक्षितुं प्रियम् ॥१८॥
सान्त्वयित्वा तु तां रामो रुदतीं जनकात्मजाम् । उवाच लक्ष्मणं तत्र दुःखितो दुःखितं वचः ॥१९॥
आनयेङ्गुदिपिण्याकं चीरमाहर चोत्तरम् । जलक्रियार्थं तातस्य गमिष्यामि महात्मनः ॥२०॥
सीता पुरस्ताद् व्रजतु त्वमेनामभितो व्रज । अहं पश्चाद् गमिष्यामि गतिर्ह्येषा सुदारुणा ॥२१॥

When Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha) spoke as above, copious tears welled up in consequence in the eyes of those illustrious princes. (16) Having consoled their afflicted brother to the best of their ability, all the aforesaid brothers then said (to him), "Let water be offered to (the spirit of) our imperial father." (17) Hearing of the celebrated emperor, her father-in-law, having ascended to heaven, the renowned Sītā with her eyes full of tears was not able to look at her beloved lord. (18) Consoling the aforesaid Sītā (daughter of Janaka), who was weeping, the afflicted Śrī Rāma for his part spoke as follows to the distressed Lakṣmaṇa on that (very) spot :—(19) "Bring the crushed pulp of Ingudi, a piece of bark for being wrapped about my loins and another for being used as an upper garment. I shall proceed (to the river bank) to perform the rite of offering water to (the spirit of) our high-souled father. (20) Let Sītā walk at the head and follow you at her heels. I shall follow in the rear; for such is the most painful procedure (employed on occasions of mourning)." (21)

ततो नित्यानुगस्तेषां विदितात्मा महामतिः । मृदुर्दान्तश्च कान्तश्च रामे च दृढभक्तिमान् ॥२२॥
सुमन्त्रस्तैर्नृपसुतैः सार्धमाश्वास्य राघवम् । अवतारयदालम्ब्य नदीं मन्दाकिनीं शिवाम् ॥२३॥
ते सुतीर्थां ततः कृच्छ्रादुपगम्य यशस्विनः । नदीं मन्दाकिनीं रम्यां सदा पुष्पितकाननाम् ॥२४॥
शीघ्रस्रोतसमासाद्य तीर्थं शिवमकर्दमम् । सिषिचुस्तूदकं राज्ञे तत एतद् भवत्विति ॥२५॥
प्रगृह्य तु महीपालो जलापूरितमञ्जलिम् । दिशं याम्यामभिमुखो रुदन् वचनमब्रवीत् ॥२६॥
एतत् ते राजशार्दूल विमलं तोयमक्षयम् । पितृलोकगतस्याद्य मद्दत्तमुपतिष्ठतु ॥२७॥
ततो मन्दाकिनीतीरं प्रत्युत्तीर्य स राघवः । पितुश्चकार तेजस्वी निर्वापं भ्रातृभिः सह ॥२८॥

Consoling Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) along with those (other) princes, and holding the former by the hand, Sumantra, their hereditary servant,—who had realized the Self, was possessed of great intelligence, gentle, self-controlled and glorious, and was full of unswerving devotion to Śrī Rāma,—helped him descend to the blessed river Mandākinī. (22-23) Having reached with difficulty (because of their inability to walk, overwhelmed as they were with grief caused by their father's demise) the lovely and swift-flowing river Mandākinī,—which was provided with easy descents (for bathing purposes) and was hemmed in with woodlands ever full of blossom,—and, betaking themselves to a blessed descent free from mud, Śrī Rāma and others for their part offered water to the (departed) king, saying "Dear father, let this water reach you." (24-25) Holding together, in the form of a hollow, his palms full of water, and standing with his face turned towards the southern quarter (presided over by Yama, the god of death), Śrī Rāma (the ruler of the earth) for his part spoke weeping as follows :—(26) "Let this limpid water offered by me today serve you, who have left for the world of manes, inexhaustibly, O tiger among kings !" (27) Re-ascending to the bank of the Mandākinī the celebrated and glorious Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) then offered balls of food to his father along with his (other three brothers. (28)

ऐङ्गुदं बदरैर्मिश्रं पिण्याकं दर्भसंस्तरे । न्यस्य रामः सुदुःखार्तो रुदन् वचनमब्रवीत् ॥२९॥
इदं भुङ्क्ष्व महाराज प्रीतो यदशना वयम् । यदन्नः पुरुषो भवति तदन्नास्तस्य देवताः ॥३०॥
ततस्तेनैव मार्गेण प्रत्युत्तीर्य सरित्तटात् । आरुरोह नरव्याघ्रो रम्यसानुं महीधरम् ॥३१॥
ततः पर्णकुटीद्वारमासाद्य जगतीपतिः । परिजग्राह पाणिभ्यामुभौ भरतलक्ष्मणौ ॥३२॥
तेषां तु रुदतां शब्दात् प्रतिशब्दोऽभवद् गिरौ । भ्रातृणां सह वैदेह्या सिंहानां नर्दतामिव ॥३३॥
महाबलानां रुदतां कुर्वतामुदकं पितुः । विज्ञाय तुमुलं शब्दं त्रस्ता भरतसैनिकाः ॥३४॥
अब्रुवंश्चापि रामेण भरतः संगतो ध्रुवम् । तेषामेव महाञ्शब्दः शोचतां पितरं मृतम् ॥३५॥

Serving the crushed pulp of Ingudī fruit mixed with (the pulp of) plums on a mat of Kuśa grass, Śrī Rāma, who was sore stricken with agony, spoke weeping as follows :—(29) "Delightfully partake of this, which is our (only) food, O great monarch ! Deities partake of the same food which a man (worshipping them) eats." (30) Moving up from the river bank once more by the same route (along which he had descended,) Śrī Rāma (a tiger among men) then ascended the mountain (Chitrakoot), which was crowned with a lovely summit. (31) Reaching the entrance of the hut of leafy twigs (in which he dwelt), Śrī Rāma (the emperor) now clasped both Bharata and Lakṣmaṇa by his hands (and wept loudly). (32) From the cry of those brothers with Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom), which resembled the noise of roaring lions, rose an echo in the mountain. (33) The troops of Bharata got alarmed to hear the confused noise of the four exceptionally mighty brothers who (they thought) were crying while offering water to (the spirit of) their (deceased) father, and said (to one another), "Surely Prince Bharata has met Śrī Rāma. This is undoubtedly the loud cry of those (four) brothers mourning for their deceased father." (34-35)

अथ वाहान् परित्यज्य तं सर्वेऽभिमुखाः स्वनम् । अप्येकमनसो जग्मुर्यथास्थानं प्रधाविताः ॥३६॥
हयैरन्ये गजैरन्ये रथैरन्ये स्वलंकृतैः । सुकुमारास्तथैवान्ये पद्भिरेव नरा ययुः ॥३७॥
अचिरप्रोषितं रामं चिरविप्रोषितं यथा । द्रष्टुकामो जनः सर्वो जगाम सहसाऽऽश्रमम् ॥३८॥
भ्रातृणां त्वरितास्ते तु द्रष्टुकामाः समागमम् । ययुर्बहुविधैर्यानैः खुरनेमिसमाकुलैः ॥३९॥
सा भूमिर्बहुभिर्यानै रथनेमिसमाहता । मुमोच तुमुलं शब्दं द्यौरिवाभ्रसमागमे ॥४०॥
तेन वित्रासिता नागाः करेणुपरिवारिताः । आवासयन्तो गन्धेन जग्मुरन्यद्वनं ततः ॥४१॥
वराहमृगसिंहाश्च महिषाः सृमरास्तथा । व्याघ्रगोकर्णगवया वित्रेसुः पृषतैः सह ॥४२॥

Leaving their conveyances, all troops without exception ran fast with an undivided mind to the place from which the sound was coming, with their faces turned towards that sound. (36) Some people (other than the troops) who were tender (of body) rode on horses, others on elephants and (still) others in chariots tastefully decorated; while still others went on foot alone. (37) Eager to see Śrī Rāma, as though he had been away from his home (Ayodhya) for a long time, although he had left his home not long before, all men rushed headlong to the hermitage (of Śrī Rāma). (38) Keen to behold the meeting of the (four) brothers, they for their part hastily rode on hoofed animals and wheeled vehicles of various kinds. (39) Run over by many animals and vehicles and (consequently) struck against by hoofs and felloes, that land (of Chitrakoot) produced a tumultuous noise as heavens during the collection of clouds. (40) Terrified by that noise, (wild) elephants accompanied by female elephants migrated to another forest from that place, perfuming the quarters with the scent of their ichor. (41) Boars, deer and lions, buffaloes, Sṛmaras and Gokarṇas (two distinctive species of deer) as well as tigers and Gavayas along with spotted deer felt stricken with terror. (2)

रथाङ्गहंसा नत्यूहाः प्लवाः कारण्डवाः परे । तथा पुंस्कोकिलाः क्रौञ्चा विसंज्ञा भेजिरे दिशः ॥४३॥
तेन शब्देन वित्रस्तैराकाशं पक्षिभिर्वृतम् । मनुष्यैरावृता भूमिरुभयं प्रबभौ तदा ॥४४॥
ततस्तं पुरुषव्याघ्रं यशस्विनमकल्मषम् । आसीनं स्थण्डिले रामं ददर्श सहसा जनः ॥४५॥
विगर्हमाणः कैकेयीं मन्थरासहितामपि । अभिगम्य जनो रामं बाष्पपूर्णमुखोऽभवत् ॥४६॥
तान् नरान् बाष्पपूर्णाक्षान् समीक्ष्याथ सुदुःखितान् । पर्यष्वजत धर्मज्ञः पितृवन्मातृवच्च सः ॥४७॥

स तत्र कांश्चित् परिषस्वजे नरान् नराश्च केचित्तु तमभ्यवादयन् ।
चकार सर्वान् सवयस्यबान्धवान् यथार्हमासाद्य तदा नृपात्मजः ॥४८॥
ततः स तेषां रुदतां महात्मनां भुवं च खं चानुविनादयन् स्वनः ।
गुहा गिरीणां च दिशश्च संततं मृदङ्गघोषप्रतिमो विशुश्रुवे ॥४९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्र्यधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ १०३ ॥

Chakrawākas, swans and water-fowl, Plavas (a kind of heron), Kāraṇḍavas (a sort of duck) and other (aquatic) birds, male cuckoos and cranes flew utterly confused in various directions. (43) The sky was screened with birds terrified by that sound, while the land was covered with men; (and) both looked most charming on that occasion. (44) All of a sudden people now beheld the illustrious and sinless Śrī Rāma, that tiger among men, sitting on the altar. (45) Approaching Śrī Rāma, the people, who had been reproaching Kaikeyī including Mantharā too, found their (own.) face bathed in tears. (46) Perceiving those men sore distressed with their eyes full of tears, Śrī Rāma, who knew what is right, presently embraced them like their father and mother. (47) (Nay) he embraced some men (who deserved it), while others on that spot hailed him. Approaching them on that occasion, the prince received (them) all including his friends and relations according to the rank of each. (48) Making the earth and the heavens as well as the mountain caves and the quarters incessantly resound, the aforesaid cry of those wailing high-souled men was continuously heard far and wide like the sound of a clay tomtom. (49)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and three in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

चतुरधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CIV

Accompanied by Kausalyā and others, Sage Vasiṣṭha proceeds to the hermitage of Śrī Rāma. Showing to her co-wives the lumps of the pulp of the Ingudī fruit offered to the spirit of his deceased father by Śrī Rāma on blades of Kuśa grass placed with their ends pointing to the south along the bank of the Mandākinī on the way, Kausalyā grieves for her deceased husband. Reaching the hermitage, Kausalyā and others see the two brothers (Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) fall at their feet. Kausalyā bewails the lot of Sītā when the latter falls at her feet. Bowing down at the feet of his preceptor, Śrī Rāma takes his seat. Accompanied by the counsellors, Bharata too sits near by.

वसिष्ठः पुरतः कृत्वा दारान् दशरथस्य च । अभिचक्राम तं देशं रामदर्शनतर्षितः ॥ १ ॥
राजपत्न्यश्च गच्छन्त्यो मन्दं मन्दाकिनीं प्रति । ददृशुस्तत्र तत् तीर्थं रामलक्ष्मणसेवितम् ॥ २ ॥
कौसल्या बाष्पपूर्णेन मुखेन परिशुष्यता । सुमित्रामब्रवीद् दीनां याश्चान्या राजयोषितः ॥ ३ ॥
इदं तेषामनाथानां क्लिष्टमक्लिष्टकर्मणाम् । वने प्राक्कलनं तीर्थं ये ते निर्विषयीकृताः ॥ ४ ॥
इतः सुमित्रे पुत्रस्ते सदा जलमतन्द्रितः । स्वयं हरति सौमित्रिर्मम पुत्रस्य कारणात् ॥ ५ ॥
जघन्यमपि ते पुत्रः कृतवान् न तु गर्हितः । भ्रातुर्यदर्थरहितं सर्वं तद् गर्हितं गुणैः ॥ ६ ॥
अद्यायमपि ते पुत्रः क्लेशानामतथोचितः । नीचानर्थसमाचारं सज्जं कर्म प्रमुञ्चतु ॥ ७ ॥
दक्षिणाग्रेषु दर्भेषु सा ददर्श महीतले । पितुरिङ्गुदिपिण्याकं न्यस्तमायतलोचना ॥ ८ ॥

Placing the widows of King Daśaratha in the forefront, Vasiṣṭha, who was feeling athirst for the sight of Śrī Rāma, proceeded to that region (where Śrī Rāma was sojourning). (1) Making their way with slow paces towards the river Mandākinī the dowager queens saw there a descent (suitable for bathing etc.) to the river resorted to by Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. (2) With a withering face bathed in tears, Kausalyā spoke (as follows) to the afflicted Sumitrā and the other queens that were present there:—(3) "Here is the descent selected for the first time by those fatherless children, who have been expelled from their kingdom and who are (now) living a hard life in the forest, though unwearied in action. (4) Along this route, O Sumitrā, does your (elder) son (Lakṣmaṇa) ever unweariedly fetch water himself for the sake of my son (his elder brother). (5) Your son has not been subjected to (any) reproach, even though he has done menial service (to his elder brother). All that which is devoid of use to one's (elder) brother (who is held to be on a par with one's father) is censured by men possessed of noble qualities. (6) Let this son of yours too, who is undeserving of the hardships which are being experienced by him, totally give up the work in hand whose execution is painful and fit for menials (now that his elder brother is soon returning to Ayodhya)." (7) The large-eyed Kausalyā (presently) saw the crushed pulp of Ingudī fruits placed (by Śrī Rāma) on blades of Kuśa grass spread on the earth's surface with their ends pointing to the south as an offering intended for (the gratification of) his (deceased) father. (8)

तं भूमौ पितुरार्तेन न्यस्तं रामेण वीक्ष्य सा । उवाच देवी कौसल्या सर्वा दशरथस्त्रियः ॥९॥
इदमिक्ष्वाकुनाथस्य राघवस्य महात्मनः । राघवेण पितुर्दत्तं पश्यतैतद् यथाविधि ॥१०॥
तस्य देवसमानस्य पार्थिवस्य महात्मनः । नैतदौपयिकं मन्ये भुक्तभोगस्य भोजनम् ॥११॥
चतुरन्तां महीं भुक्त्वा महेन्द्रसदृशो भुवि । कथमिङ्गुदिपिण्याकं स भुङ्क्ते वसुधाधिपः ॥१२॥
अतो दुःखतरं लोके न किंचित् प्रतिभाति मे । यत्र रामः पितुर्दद्यादिङ्गुदीक्षोदमृद्धिमान् ॥१३॥
रामेणेङ्गुदिपिण्याकं पितुर्दत्तं समीक्ष्य मे । कथं दुःखेन हृदयं न स्फोटति सहस्रधा ॥१४॥
श्रुतिस्तु खल्वियं सत्या लौकिकी प्रतिभाति मे । यदन्नः पुरुषो भवति तदन्नास्तस्य देवताः ॥१५॥
एवमार्तां सपत्न्यस्ता जग्मुराश्वास्य तां तदा । ददृशुश्चाश्रमे रामं स्वर्गच्च्युतमिवामरम् ॥१६॥

Observing the said pulp placed on the ground by the afflicted Śrī Rāma for (the gratification of) his (deceased) father, the aforesaid Queen Kausalyā spoke (as follows) to all the (other) consorts of King Daśaratha:—(9) "Behold here this offering made in accordance with the scriptural ordinance by Rāma (a scion of Raghu) for (the gratification of) his high-souled father, (the late) King Daśaratha (also a scion of Raghu), the lord of the Ikṣwākus. (10) I do not consider this food (*viz*, the pulp of the Ingudī-fruit) to be fit for (the consumption of) that high-souled monarch, who vied with gods and had enjoyed (all) the luxuries (of life). (11) Having ruled over the globe bounded by the four oceans, how will the emperor, who was a compeer on earth of the great Indra, be able to partake of the crushed pulp of Ingudī fruits? (12) Nothing in the world appears more painful to me than the occasion when Rāma, who is full of riches (of every description) should (feel constrained to) offer the crushed pulp of Ingudī fruits to (the spirit of) his (deceased) father. (13) Why does my heart not get split into a thousand fragments through agony perceiving the crushed pulp of Ingudī fruits offered by Rāma to (the spirit of) his (deceased) father?" (14) "The popular saying that the deities of a man partake of the same food on which a man subsists appears undoubtedly true to us." (15) Comforting the afflicted Kausalyā in the foregoing words on that occasion, her aforesaid co-wives departed (with Kausalyā) and beheld Śrī Rāma seated in his hermitage like an immortal fallen from heaven. (16)

तं भोगैः सम्परित्यक्तं रामं सम्प्रेक्ष्य मातरः । आर्ता मुमुचुरश्रूणि सस्वरं शोककर्शिताः ॥१७॥
तासां रामः समुत्थाय जग्राह चरणाम्बुजान् । मातृणां मनुजव्याघ्रः सर्वासां सत्यसंगरः ॥१८॥
ताः पाणिभिः सुखस्पर्शैर्मृद्वङ्गुलितलैः शुभैः । प्रममार्जू रजः पृष्ठाद् रामस्यायतलोचनाः ॥१९॥
सौमित्रिरपि ताः सर्वा मातॄः सम्प्रेक्ष्य दुःखितः । अभ्यवादयदासक्तं शनै रामादनन्तरम् ॥२०॥
यथा रामे तथा तस्मिन् सर्वा ववृतिरे स्त्रियः । वृत्तिं दशरथाज्जाते लक्ष्मणे शुभलक्षणे ॥२१॥
सीतापि चरणांस्तासामुपसंगृह्य दुःखिता । श्वश्रूणामश्रुपूर्णाक्षी सम्बभूवाग्रतः स्थिता ॥२२॥
तां परिष्वज्य दुःखार्ता माता दुहितरं यथा । वनवासकृतां दीनां कौसल्या वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥२३॥

वैदेहराजन्यसुता स्नुषा दशरथस्य च । रामपत्नी कथं दुःखं सम्प्राप्ता विजने वने ॥२४॥
पद्ममातपसंतप्तं परिक्लिष्टमिवोत्पलम् । काञ्चनं रजसा ध्वस्तं क्लिष्टं चन्द्रमिवाम्बुदैः ॥२५॥
मुखं ते प्रेक्ष्य मां शोको दहत्यग्निरिवाश्रयम् । भृशं मनसि वैदेहि व्यसनारणिसम्भवः ॥२६॥

Distressed to observe the celebrated Śrī Rāma shorn of all luxuries, his mothers wept loudly, emaciated as they were through grief. (17) Duly rising (from his seat), Śrī Rāma, a (veritable) tiger among men, who was true to his promise, clasped the lotus-like feet of all his aforesaid mothers. (18) With their lovely hands, which were delightful to the touch and the base of whose fingers was (exceptionally) soft, those large-eyed ladies wiped the dust off Śrī Rāma's back. (19) Distressed to perceive all the aforesaid mothers, Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) too fondly greeted them immediately after Śrī Rāma. (20) All the ladies behaved towards the celebrated Lakṣmaṇa, sprung from (the loins of) Daśaratha, who was endowed with auspicious bodily marks, in the same way as they did towards Śrī Rāma. (21) Holding firmly the feet of the said mothers-in-law, Sītā too stood agonized before them with her eyes full of tears. (22) Embracing her as a mother would embrace her (own) daughter, the sorrow-stricken Kausalyā spoke as follows to Sītā, who looked withered through exile in the forest:— (23) "I wonder how the consort of Rāma, daughter of Janaka (a royal personage of the Videha clan) and daughter-in-law of (Emperor) Daśaratha, has undergone suffering in a lonely forest. (24) The fire of grief produced by the firewood of adversity and existing in my mind, O princess of the Videha kingdom, burns me to the core even as (the element of) fire consumes the very substance that sustains it, when I gaze on your countenance resembling a lotus scorched by the sun, a crushed lily, gold soiled with dust and the moon obscured by clouds." (25-26)

ब्रुवन्त्यामेवमार्तायां जनन्यां भरताग्रजः । पादावासाद्य जग्राह वसिष्ठस्य च राघवः ॥२७॥
पुरोहितस्याग्निसमस्य तस्य वै बृहस्पतेरिन्द्र इवामराधिपः ।
प्रगृह्य पादौ सुसमृद्धतेजसः सहैव तेनोपविवेश राघवः ॥२८॥
ततो जघन्यं स हितैः स्वमन्त्रिभिः पुरप्रधानैश्च तथैव सैनिकैः ।
जनेन धर्मज्ञतमेन धर्मवानुपोपविष्टो भरतस्तदाग्रजम् ॥२९॥
उपोपविष्टस्तु तदातिवीर्यवांस्तपस्विवेषेण समीक्ष्य राघवम् ।
श्रिया ज्वलन्तं भरतः कृताञ्जलिर्यथा महेन्द्रः प्रयतः प्रजापतिम् ॥३०॥
किमेष वाक्यं भरतोऽद्य राघवं प्रणम्य सत्कृत्य च साधु वक्ष्यति ।
इतीव तस्यार्यजनस्य तत्त्वतो बभूव कौतूहलमुत्तमं तदा ॥३१॥
स राघवः सत्यधृतिश्च लक्ष्मणो महानुभावो भरतश्च धार्मिकः ।
वृताः सुहृद्भिश्च विरेजिरेऽध्वरे यथा सदस्यैः सहितास्त्रयोऽग्नयः ॥३२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुरधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ १०४ ॥

Reaching the feet of Vasiṣṭha, while his distressed mother was speaking as aforesaid, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the elder brother of Bharata, clasped them. (27) Holding the feet of the said priest,—who was possessed of very great splendour and resembled the fire-god,—even as Indra (the ruler of gods) would clasp the feet of Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of gods), Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) took his seat with Vasiṣṭha himself. (28) Thereupon along with his friends, counsellors and the foremost of citizens as well as with the troops and men who knew best what is right the celebrated Bharata, who was full of piety, sat down on that occasion close to his elder brother (Śrī Rāma) at his back. (29) Perceiving Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) blazing with glory in the garb of an ascetic, Bharata, for his part, (who) was seated close by at that time and was exceedingly powerful, joined his palms in the same way as the mighty Indra submissively would before Brahmā (the lord of created beings). (30) A great curiosity really arose at that moment in the mind of those worthies (assembled there) as to what submission yonder Bharata would now politely make after bowing low and paying his homage to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) that day. (31) Nay, surrounded by their near and dear ones, the celebrated Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who was firmly devoted to truthfulness, and the noble-minded Lakṣmaṇa and the pious Bharata shone brightly on the sacrificial ground like the three sacrificial fires (known by the names of Gārhapatya, Āhavanīya and Dakṣiṇā) accompanied by the superintending priests. (32)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and four in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CV

Bharata implores Śrī Rāma to oblige him by accepting the throne of Ayodhya being offered by him to Śrī Rāma with the concurrence of Kaikeyī, even though bestowed on him by their deceased father. Consoling Bharata, who held himself responsible for Śrī Rāma's exile to the forest and was languishing with sorrow on that score, Śrī Rāma, however, tries to pacify him in various ways and urges him to shoulder the burden of rulership.

ततः पुरुषसिंहानां वृतानां तैः सुहृद्गणैः । शोचतामेव रजनी दुःखेन व्यत्यवर्तत ॥ १ ॥
रजन्यां सुप्रभातायां भ्रातरस्ते सुहृद्वृताः । मन्दाकिन्यां हुतं जप्यं कृत्वा राममुपागमन् ॥ २ ॥
तूष्णीं ते समुपासीना न कश्चित् किंचिदब्रवीत् । भरतस्तु सुहृन्मध्ये रामं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ ३ ॥
सान्त्विता मामिका माता दत्तं राज्यमिदं मम । तद् ददामि तवैवाहं भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यमकण्टकम् ॥ ४ ॥
महतेवाम्बुवेगेन भिन्नः सेतुर्जलागमे । दुरावरं त्वदन्येन राज्यखण्डमिदं महत् ॥ ५ ॥
गतिं खर इवाश्वस्य तार्क्ष्यस्येव पतत्त्रिणः । अनुगन्तुं न शक्तिर्मे गतिं तव महीपते ॥ ६ ॥
सुजीवं नित्यशस्तस्य यः परैरुपजीव्यते । राम तेन तु दुर्जीवं यः परानुपजीवति ॥ ७ ॥

The night subsequently passed away in sorrow in the case of the (said) tigers among men, accompanied by those near and dear ones, while the former were grieving. (1) Having offered oblations into the sacred fire and muttered their prayers on the bank of the Mandākinī, when the night had been vividly relieved by dawn, the aforesaid brothers, accompanied by their near and dear ones, sought the presence of Śrī Rāma. (2) They (all) sat down mute, none spoke anything. Bharata for his part made the following submission to Śrī Rāma in the midst of his near and dear ones:—(3) "My mother (Kaikeyī) has been consoled (by you) and this kingdom (of Ayodhya) bestowed on me. I (hereby) return it to your own self. (Please) enjoy it without impediment. (4) (Just) as a dam breached by a mighty onrush of water during the rains cannot be easily repaired, this large state (of Ayodhya) cannot be easily held in one's grip by anyone other than you. (5) The power to emulate your ruling capacity does not lie in me, O ruler of the globe, any more than the power to emulate the gait of a horse in a donkey and the flight of Garuḍa (the carrier of Lord Viṣṇu) in a (common) bird. (6) Know his life to be blessed from day to day, who is depended upon by others. Life is, however, dragged on with hardship by him who depends for his life upon others, O Rāma ! (7)

यथा तु रोपितो वृक्षः पुरुषेण विवर्धितः । ह्रस्वकेन दुरारोहो रूढस्कन्धो महाद्रुमः ॥ ८ ॥
स यदा पुष्पितो भूत्वा फलानि न विदर्शयेत् । स तां नानुभवेत् प्रीतिं यस्य हेतोः प्ररोपितः ॥ ९ ॥
एषोपमा महाबाहो तदर्थं वेत्तुमर्हसि । यत्र त्वमस्मान् वृषभो भर्ता भृत्यान् न शाधि हि ॥१०॥
श्रेणयस्त्वां महाराज पश्यन्त्वग्र्याश्च सर्वशः । प्रतपन्तमिवादित्यं राज्यस्थितमरिंदमम् ॥११॥
तथानुयाने काकुत्स्थ मत्ता नर्दन्तु कुञ्जराः । अन्तःपुरगता नार्यो नन्दन्तु सुसमाहिताः ॥१२॥

"For example a tree planted and nurtured by a man develops (in course of time) into a mighty tree with a stout trunk hard to scale for a dwarf. (8) But when, though laden with flowers, it does not bear fruits, the man does not experience the same delight which he expected from it due to his failure to reach the consummation for which it was planted with effort. (9) This is (only) an analogy, O mighty-armed brother: be pleased to make out its meaning, since you, our supreme master, do not (care to) instruct us, your servants, on this occasion (when it behoves you to protect us). (10) Let the guilds of traders (of every class) and their leaders behold you, the subduer of enemies, seated on the throne like the sun blazing on all sides, O great king ! (11) Likewise let the elephants in rut trumpet in the course of your return journey (to Ayodhya) and let the ladies living in the (royal) gynaeceum, fully collected in mind, rejoice (to see you returned)". (12)

तस्य साध्वनुमन्यन्त नागरा विविधा जनाः । भरतस्य वचः श्रुत्वा रामं प्रत्यनुयाचतः ॥१३॥
तमेवं दुःखितं प्रेक्ष्य विलपन्तं यशस्विनम् । रामः कृतात्मा भरतं समाश्वासयदात्मवान् ॥१४॥
नात्मनः कामकारो हि पुरुषोऽयमनीश्वरः । इतश्चेतरतश्चैनं कृतान्तः परिकर्षति ॥१५॥
सर्वे क्षयान्ता निचयाः पतनान्ताः समुच्छ्रयाः । संयोगा विप्रयोगान्ता मरणान्तं च जीवितम् ॥१६॥
यथा फलानां पक्वानां नान्यत्र पतनाद् भयम् । एवं नरस्य जातस्य नान्यत्र मरणाद् भयम् ॥१७॥
यथाऽऽगारं दृढस्थूलं जीर्णं भूत्वोपसीदति । तथावसीदन्ति नरा जरामृत्युवशंगताः ॥१८॥

Hearing the submission of the celebrated Bharata, supplicating (as aforesaid) Śrī Rāma, the citizens of every class (assembled at Chitrakoot) acclaimed it in the words "Well said !" (13) Perceiving the said illustrious Bharata wailing as above, afflicted as he was, Śrī Rāma, who was self-possessed and self-disciplined comforted him (in the following words:—) (14) "Freedom of action does not belong to the embodied soul, since this soul is powerless (unlike God). Providence alone forcibly drags the soul hither and thither. (15) All accumulations end in attenuation; all elevations end in degradation; all unions end in separation; all life has its end in death. (16) As no fear from any quarter other than a fall awaits ripe fruits, so no fear from any quarter other than death awaits a man come into the world. (17) (Even) as a house (though) supported by stout pillars collapses on getting old, so men fallen into the clutches of old age and death breathe their last. (18)

अत्येति रजनी या तु सा न प्रतिनिवर्तते । यात्येव यमुना पूर्णं समुद्रमुदकार्णवम् ॥१९॥
अहोरात्राणि गच्छन्ति सर्वेषां प्राणिनामिह । आयूंषि क्षपयन्त्याशु ग्रीष्मे जलमिवांशवः ॥२०॥
आत्मानमनुशोच त्वं किमन्यमनुशोचसि । आयुस्तु हीयते यस्य स्थितस्यास्य गतस्य च ॥२१॥
सहैव मृत्युर्व्रजति सह मृत्युर्निषीदति । गत्वा सुदीर्घमध्वानं सह मृत्युर्निवर्तते ॥२२॥
गात्रेषु वलयः प्राप्ताः श्वेताश्चैव शिरोरुहाः । जरया पुरुषो जीर्णः किं हि कृत्वा प्रभावयेत् ॥२३॥
नन्दन्त्युदित आदित्ये नन्दन्त्यस्तमितेऽहनि । आत्मनो नावबुध्यन्ते मनुष्या जीवितक्षयम् ॥२४॥

"The night that passes away does not return in any case; the Yamuna (river) meets without fail the all-sufficient ocean, abounding in water. (19) Passing days and nights quickly end the life-span of all living beings in this world, (even) as sunbeams suck up water in summer. (20) Grieve for yourself (alone), why do you grieve for another ? In fact, the life-span of each and every creature, whether staying (at home) or departed (for another place), gets shortened (every moment). (21) Death ever walks with us (when we are walking) and remains seated with us (while we are sitting). (Nay,) having travelled a very long distance (with us) death returns with us (on our return). (22) When folds have appeared on (the skin of) the limbs and the hair have turned grey, by what expedient will a man worn out with age be able to control them ? (23) Men rejoice when the sun has risen and (also) rejoice when the day has ended, but do not perceive the ebbing of their life. (24)

हृष्यन्त्यृतुमुखं दृष्ट्वा नवं नवमिवागतम् । ऋतूनां परिवर्तेन प्राणिनां प्राणसंक्षयः ॥२५॥
यथा काष्ठं च काष्ठं च समेयातां महार्णवे । समेत्य तु व्यपेयातां कालमासाद्य कंचन ॥२६॥
एवं भार्याश्च पुत्राश्च ज्ञातयश्च वसूनि च । समेत्य व्यवधावन्ति ध्रुवो ह्येषां विनाभवः ॥२७॥
नात्र कश्चिद् यथाभावं प्राणी समतिवर्तते । तेन तस्मिन् न सामर्थ्यं प्रेतस्यास्त्यनुशोचतः ॥२८॥
यथा हि सार्थं गच्छन्तं ब्रूयात् कश्चित् पथि स्थितः । अहमप्यागमिष्यामि पृष्ठतो भवतामिति ॥२९॥
एवं पूर्वैर्गतो मार्गः पैतृपितामहैर्ध्रुवः । तमापन्नः कथं शोचेद् यस्य नास्ति व्यतिक्रमः ॥३०॥

"People rejoice to see the approach of a season (say, the vernal season or the monsoon) as though it had appeared for the first time. But (they forget that) with a change of season comes about the (gradual) waning of life of living beings. (25) (Even) as two pieces of drift-wood come together on the surface of an ocean (at a particular moment of time) and, having come together (in this way), drift apart on reaching a particular moment, so wives and sons as well as relations and riches part company after coming together; for inevitable is their separation. (26-27) No living being in this world can escape its destiny (in the shape of birth and death.) when the time comes for it. Hence the power to avert his own death does not inhere in a man mourning again and again for a dead person. (28) How can he who has got on the inevitable path trodden by his forbears, *viz*, his father, grandfather and so on, and from which there is no escape,—(even) as one standing on the roadside would cry to a company of travellers passing by, 'I shall also follow at your heels' (and would forthwith follow them),—mourn (for his parents and other departed relations)? (29-30)

वयसः पतमानस्य स्रोतसो वानिवर्तिनः । आत्मा सुखे नियोक्तव्यः सुखभाजः प्रजाः स्मृताः ॥३१॥
धर्मात्मा सुशुभैः कृत्स्नैः क्रतुभिश्चाप्तदक्षिणैः । न स शोच्यः पिता तात स्वर्गतः सत्कृतः सताम् ॥३२॥
स जीर्णमानुषं देहं परित्यज्य पिता हि नः । दैवीमृद्धिमनुप्राप्तो ब्रह्मलोकविहारिणीम् ॥३३॥
तं तु नैवंविधः कश्चित् प्राज्ञः शोचितुमर्हति । त्वद्विधो मद्विधश्चापि श्रुतवान् बुद्धिमत्तरः ॥३४॥
एते बहुविधाः शोका विलापरुदिते तदा । वर्जनीया हि धीरेण सर्वावस्थासु धीमता ॥३५॥
स स्वस्थो भव मा शोको यात्वा चावस तां पुरीम् । तथा पित्रा नियुक्तोऽसि वशिना वदतां वर ॥३६॥

"Foreseeing the (inevitable) end of one's ebbing life, which does not return any more than a stream, one's own self should be employed in a pursuit leading to blessedness; (for) living beings are declared as pursuing happiness. (31) Our celebrated father, whose mind was given to piety, who was respected (even) by the righteous and who has attained heaven through all kinds of sacrificial performances of a highly blessed character with handsome fees to the priests officiating at them, is not to be grieved for (in any way), my darling! (32) Having shed his worn-out human frame, our father has surely attained celestial wealth (in the form of an ethereal body etc.), which enables him to sport (even) in the realm of Brahmā (the highest heaven). (33) No highly wise, learned and exceptionally clever man such as you and I are, ought to grieve (for the emperor). (34) These manifold griefs as well as wailing and weeping should in that case undoubtedly be given up under all circumstances by a resolute man possessed of wisdom. (35) As such be at ease, let not grief overpower you. And, returning (home), dwell in that city (of Ayodhya). So have you been enjoined by father, a master of his will, O jewel among the eloquent! (36)

यत्राहमपि तेनैव नियुक्तः पुण्यकर्मणा । तत्रैवाहं करिष्यामि पितुरार्यस्य शासनम् ॥३७॥
न मया शासनं तस्य त्यक्तुं न्याय्यमरिंदम । स त्वयापि सदा मान्यः स वै बन्धुः स नः पिता ॥३८॥
तद् वचः पितुरेवाहं सम्मतं धर्मचारिणाम् । कर्मणा पालयिष्यामि वनवासेन राघव ॥३९॥
धार्मिकेणानृशंसेन नरेण गुरुवर्तिना । भवितव्यं नरव्याघ्र परलोकं जिगीषता ॥४०॥
आत्मानमनुतिष्ठ त्वं स्वभावेन नरर्षभ । निशाम्य तु शुभं वृत्तं पितुर्दशरथस्य नः ॥४१॥
इत्येवमुक्त्वा वचनं महात्मा पितुर्निदेशप्रतिपालनार्थम् ।
यवीयसं भ्रातरमर्थवच्च प्रभुर्मुहूर्ताद् विरराम रामः ॥४२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ १०५ ॥

"I (too) shall do the bidding of our noble father (continuing) in that very place where I have been enjoined to stay by that emperor of virtuous deeds. (37) It is not justifiable on my part to flout his command, O subduer of foes! He ever deserved to be honoured even by you, since he was our friend, he was our (very) father. (38) Through my action in the shape of sojourning in the forest, O scion of Raghu, I shall obey that very command of my father, which is thought highly of by those practising virtue. (39) A pious man seeking to conquer the other world, O tiger among men, ought to be kind-hearted and obedient to his elders (father and others). (40) Keeping in view the virtuous conduct of our father, King Daśaratha, O jewel among men, direct your thoughts only towards the welfare (in the other world) of your spirit in consonance with your (pious) nature." (41) Having tendered to his younger brother (Bharata) in about an hour, the aforesaid significant advice urging him to carry out the behests of their father, the high-souled and almighty Śrī Rāma became silent. (42)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and five in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षडधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CVI

Imploring Śrī Rāma with cogent reasons to accept the throne of Ayodhya, Bharata takes a vow not to return to Ayodhya but to continue in the forest in case Śrī Rāma did not grant his prayer. Mother Kausalyā and others too join Bharata and urge Śrī Rāma to grant his request when they find Śrī Rāma lukewarm in the matter and insistent on implementing the words of their deceased father.

एवमुक्त्वा तु विरते रामे वचनमर्थवत् । ततो मन्दाकिनीतीरे रामं प्रकृतिवत्सलम् ॥ १ ॥
उवाच भरतश्चित्रं धार्मिको धार्मिकं वचः । को हि स्यादीदृशो लोके यादृशस्त्वमरिंदम ॥ २ ॥
न त्वां प्रव्यथयेद् दुःखं प्रीतिर्वा न प्रहर्षयेत् । सम्मतश्चापि वृद्धानां तांश्च पृच्छसि संशयान् ॥ ३ ॥
यथा मृतस्तथा जीवन् यथासति तथा सति । यस्यैष बुद्धिलाभः स्यात् परितप्येत केन सः ॥ ४ ॥
परावरज्ञो यश्च स्याद् यथा त्वं मनुजाधिप । स एव व्यसनं प्राप्य न विषीदितुमर्हति ॥ ५ ॥
अमरोपमसत्त्वस्त्वं महात्मा सत्यसंगरः । सर्वज्ञः सर्वदर्शी च बुद्धिमांश्चासि राघव ॥ ६ ॥
न त्वामेवंगुणैर्युक्तं प्रभवाभवकोविदम् । अविषह्यतमं दुःखमासादयितुमर्हति ॥ ७ ॥

When Śrī Rāma became silent after making a significant speech as aforesaid, the pious Bharata for his part now addressed to Śrī Rāma, who was (so) fond of his people, the following agreeable and righteous submission on the bank of the Mandākinī:—"Indeed who can there be in this world such as you are, O tamer of foes? (1-2) Neither can sorrow torment you nor can joy exhilarate you. Though highly thought of by the elders, you nevertheless refer your doubts to them. (3) Wherefore should he grieve, he who has developed an attitude of mind by virtue of which, though living, he is as good as dead (to the world) and which makes him as indifferent to the existent as to the non-existent ? (4) He who knows the Self as well as the non-self as you do, O ruler of men, ought not to feel dejected even on meeting with adversity. (5) Possessed of valour comparing with that of gods, and endowed with great fortitude, you are true to your promise, all-knowing, all-seeing and wise too, O scion of Raghu ! (6) (Even) affliction which is most unbearable (for us) ought not to assail you, endowed (as you are) with such virtues and conversant with the origin and end of living beings. (7)

प्रोषिते मयि यत् पापं मात्रा मत्कारणात् कृतम् । क्षुद्रया तदनिष्टं मे प्रसीदतु भवान् मम ॥८॥
धर्मबन्धेन बद्धोऽस्मि तेनेमां नेह मातरम् । हन्मि तीव्रेण दण्डेन दण्डार्हां पापकारिणीम् ॥९॥
कथं दशरथाज्जातः शुभाभिजनकर्मणः । जानन् धर्ममधर्मं च कुर्यां कर्म जुगुप्सितम् ॥१०॥
गुरुः क्रियावान् वृद्धश्च राजा प्रेतः पितेति च । तातं न परिगर्हेऽहं दैवतं चेति संसदि ॥११॥
को हि धर्मार्थयोर्हीनमीदृशं कर्म किल्बिषम् । स्त्रियः प्रियचिकीर्षुः सन् कुर्याद् धर्मज्ञ धर्मवित् ॥१२॥
अन्तकाले हि भूतानि मुह्यन्तीति पुरा श्रुतिः । राज्ञैवं कुर्वता लोके प्रत्यक्षा सा श्रुतिः कृता ॥१३॥
साध्वर्थमभिसंधाय क्रोधान्मोहाच्च साहसात् । तातस्य यदतिक्रान्तं प्रत्याहरतु तद् भवान् ॥१४॥

"The sinful deed (in the shape of bringing about your exile) which was perpetrated by my mean mother for my sake when I was away was not to my liking. (Therefore) be gracious to me. (8) I am bound by fetters of morality (which forbids a warrior to lay his finger upon a woman); hence I do not kill on the spot with a severe punishment my mother of sinful deeds, who is deserving of punishment. (9) How can I, sprung (as I am) from (the loins of) Daśaratha of noble birth and deeds, and knowing (as I do) right and wrong, perpetrate an odious act (like killing my own mother) ? (10) I do not (wish to) denounce papa in an (open) assembly because he had (a number of) sacrificial performances to his credit, was aged and worthy of respect, has joined the majority and was my father and a deity to me. (11) Indeed what man who knows the principles of morality would perpetrate such a sinful act, unproductive of religious merit and (worldly) prosperity, with intent to please a woman, O knower of what is right ? (12) There is an old adage saying that living beings invariably get infatuated at the hour of death. That saying has been illustrated to the world by the king while acting as he has done. (13) Keeping in mind a noble purpose, nullify the transgression that has been committed by father for fear of wrath (of Kaikeyī) or through infatuation and precipitance. (14)

पितुर्हि समतिक्रान्तं पुत्रो यः साधु मन्यते । तदपत्यं मतं लोके विपरीतमतोऽन्यथा ॥१५॥
तदपत्यं भवानस्तु मा भवान् दुष्कृतं पितुः । अति यत् तत् कृतं कर्म लोके धीरविगर्हितम् ॥१६॥
कैकेयीं मां च तातं च सुहृदो बान्धवांश्च नः । पौरजानपदान् सर्वांस्त्रातुं सर्वमिदं भवान् ॥१७॥
क्व चारण्यं क्व च क्षात्रं क्व जटाः क्व च पालनम् । ईदृशं व्याहतं कर्म न भवान् कर्तुमर्हति ॥१८॥
एष हि प्रथमो धर्मः क्षत्रियस्याभिषेचनम् । येन शक्यं महाप्राज्ञ प्रजानां परिपालनम् ॥१९॥
कश्च प्रत्यक्षमुत्सृज्य संशयस्थमलक्षणम् । आयतिस्थं चरेद् धर्मं क्षत्रबन्धुरनिश्चितम् ॥२०॥
अथ क्लेशजमेव त्वं धर्मं चरितुमिच्छसि । धर्मेण चतुरो वर्णान् पालयन् क्लेशमाप्नुहि ॥२१॥

"A son who mends the arrant transgression of his father is accounted a son (in the real acceptance of the term*) in the world; he who acts otherwise than this is (quite) the reverse (of a son). (15) Therefore be you a (true) son; do not countenance the sinful act of our father (by implementing his word). The act which has been perpetrated by him is in contravention of (all principles of) morality and is (therefore) utterly condemned in the world by the wise. (16) Be pleased to grant all this (prayer of mine) in order to save Kaikeyī, myself, father, nay, our friends and relations as well as all the citizens and people of the country-side. (17) What congruity is there between forest life (on the one hand) and the duty of a Kṣatriya (on the other), between (wearing) matted locks (on one's head) and protection of the people? You ought not to perpetrate such an incongruous act (as may stand in the way of your discharging the duty of a Kṣatriya, *viz*, protection of the people). (18) Indeed it is the foremost duty of a Kṣatriya to get himself consecrated as a king, through which (act alone) it is possible to protect the people, O highly enlightened brother! (19) Nay, neglecting a duty yielding visible joy, what Kṣatriya esteemed by his race would practise a virtue which is of doubtful result, which does not promise happiness, which brings its reward in a future state (only) and which is undefined? (20) If you desire to pursue a virtue following from hardship alone, undergo suffering while protecting the four divisions of society by recourse to righteousness. (21)

चतुर्णामाश्रमाणां हि गार्हस्थ्यं श्रेष्ठमुत्तमम् । आहुर्धर्मज्ञ धर्मज्ञास्तं कथं त्यक्तुमिच्छसि ॥२२॥
श्रुतेन बालः स्थानेन जन्मना भवतो ह्यहम् । स कथं पालयिष्यामि भूमिं भवति तिष्ठति ॥२३॥
हीनबुद्धिगुणो बालो हीनस्थानेन चाप्यहम् । भवता च विनाभूतो न वर्तयितुमुत्सहे ॥२४॥
इदं निखिलमप्यग्र्यं राज्यं पित्र्यमकण्टकम् । अनुशाधि स्वधर्मेण धर्मज्ञ सह बान्धवैः ॥२५॥
इहैव त्वाभिषिञ्चन्तु सर्वाः प्रकृतयः सह । ऋत्विजः सवसिष्ठाश्च मन्त्रविन्मन्त्रकोविदाः ॥२६॥
अभिषिक्तस्त्वमस्माभिरयोध्यां पालने व्रज । विजित्य तरसा लोकान् मरुद्भिरिव वासवः ॥२७॥
ऋणानि त्रीण्यपाकुर्वन् दुर्हृदः साधु निर्दहन् । सुहृदस्तर्पयन् कामैस्त्वमेवात्रानुशाधि माम् ॥२८॥

"The knowers of what is right definitely declare the life of a householder to be the noblest and best of (all) the four stages of life (inasmuch as it is depended upon by all others); how (then) do you seek to abandon it, O knower of (the principles of) righteousness? (22) I am decidedly junior to you in point of learning, rank and date of birth. As such how shall I (be able to) rule over the earth when you are present? (23) A (mere) child (as I am), of poor understanding and virtues, and also placed in an inferior position (as compared with you), I cannot even live without you (much less rule over the people). (24) O knower of what is right, rule with your kinsmen over the whole of this foremost ancestral kingdom without opposition according to the code of conduct prescribed for you. (25) Let all the ministers as well as the priests including Vasiṣṭha, well-versed in sacred formulas, conjointly consecrate you (as the king of Ayodhya) on this very spot, O knower of sacred texts ! (26) Consecrated by us as Indra by Maruts (the wind-gods) and having conquered the worlds by dint of your might, march you (back) to Ayodhya in order to rule over it. (27) Discharging the three obligations (you owe to gods, Ṛṣis and manes severally by offering oblations, studying the Vedas and procreating children), completely destroying the foes and gratifying your near and dear ones through their desired objects, instruct you me at Ayodhya itself. (28)

---

* The word 'अपत्यम्' (offspring) has been etymologically explained as meaning one who prevents his father from falling down into the depth of hell ('पितुरपतनात्').

अद्यार्य मुदिताः सन्तु सुहृदस्तेऽभिषेचने । अद्य भीताः पलायन्तु दुष्प्रदास्ते दिशो दश ॥२९॥
आक्रोशं मम मातुश्च प्रमृज्य पुरुषर्षभ । अद्य तत्रभवन्तं च पितरं रक्ष किल्बिषात् ॥३०॥
शिरसा त्वाभियाचेऽहं कुरुष्व करुणां मयि । बान्धवेषु च सर्वेषु भूतेष्विव महेश्वरः ॥३१॥
अथवा पृष्ठतः कृत्वा वनमेव भवानितः । गमिष्यति गमिष्यामि भवता सार्धमप्यहम् ॥३२॥
तथाभिरामो भरतेन ताम्यता प्रसाद्यमानः शिरसा महीपतिः ।
न चैव चक्रे गमनाय सत्त्ववान् मतिं पितुस्तद्वचने प्रतिष्ठितः ॥३३॥
तदद्भुतं स्थैर्यमवेक्ष्य राघवे समं जनो हर्षमवाप दुःखितः ।
न यात्ययोध्यामिति दुःखितोऽभवत् स्थिरप्रतिज्ञत्वमवेक्ष्य हर्षितः ॥३४॥
तमृत्विजो नैगमयूथवल्लभास्तथा विसंज्ञाश्रुकलाश्च मातरः ।
तथा ब्रुवाणं भरतं प्रतुष्टुवुः प्रणम्य रामं च ययाचिरे सह ॥३५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षडधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ १०६ ॥

"Let those who are friendly (to you) feel rejoiced today on your consecration (as the king of Ayodhya), O noble brother ! Let those who are inclined to cause pain to you run frightened in every direction today. (29) Wiping off the obloquy attaching to me as well as to my mother, O jewel among men, save our esteemed father as well from remorse today. (30) I implore you with my head bent low : (pray) take pity on me as well as on all your kinsfolk (even) as Lord Śiva (the Supreme Deity) does on (all) created beings. (31) Else if, setting aside my request, you proceed from this place to a forest alone, I too shall depart with you." (32) (Even) while being propitiated as above with bowed head by Bharata, who was sinking in spirit, the graceful Śrī Rāma (the ruler of the globe), who had a strong will and clung fast to the word of his father giving consent to his exile, did not feel inclined to proceed (to Ayodhya). (33) Perceiving such wonderful firmness in Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the people (of Ayodhya) experienced joy and felt disconsolate at the same time. They were distressed to find that he was not going to Ayodhya and felt rejoiced to note his firmness of resolve. (34) The priests, the citizens and the leaders of (different) bodies of men as well as the mothers (of Śrī Rāma and others), who had (all) been rendered senseless (as it were) and had tear-drops in their eyes, complimented Bharata, who was speaking in that strain, and bowing down low to Śrī Rāma, joined Bharata in his supplication (to Śrī Rāma). (35)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and six in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्ताधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CVII

Śrī Rāma tries to impress upon Bharata,—who believed that Daśaratha was prompted by lustful attachment to his mother in making over the kingdom to him,—that Daśaratha was compelled to do so because, in the first place, he had promised to Kaikeyī's father while marrying her that the latter's son alone would succeed to the throne after Daśaratha's death, and secondly he was keen to repay the debt he owed to her for having come to his rescue in his encounter with the demons, and accordingly urges Bharata to assume the rulership of Ayodhya.

पुनरेवं ब्रुवाणं तं भरतं लक्ष्मणाग्रजः । प्रत्युवाच ततः श्रीमाञ्ज्ञातिमध्ये सुसत्कृतः ॥ १ ॥
उपपन्नमिदं वाक्यं यस्त्वमेवमभाषथाः । जातः पुत्रो दशरथात् कैकेय्यां राजसत्तमात् ॥ २ ॥
पुरा भ्रातः पिता नः स मातरं ते समुद्वहन् । मातामहे समाश्रौषीद् राज्यशुल्कमनुत्तमम् ॥ ३ ॥
देवासुरे च संग्रामे जनन्यै तव पार्थिवः । सम्प्रहृष्टो ददौ राजा वरमाराधितः प्रभुः ॥ ४ ॥
ततः सा सम्प्रतिश्राव्य तव माता यशस्विनी । अयाचत नरश्रेष्ठं द्वौ वरौ वरवर्णिनी ॥ ५ ॥
तव राज्यं नरव्याघ्र मम प्रव्राजनं तथा । तच्च राजा तथा तस्यै नियुक्तः प्रददौ वरम् ॥ ६ ॥

Thereupon the glorious Śrī Rāma (eldest brother of Lakṣmaṇa), highly respected among his clansmen, replied to the said Bharata, who was speaking again in that strain:—(1) "The assertion that you—a son born of Daśaratha, the foremost of kings, through Kaikeyī—have made just now as above is reasonable. (2) In the past, while marrying Kaikeyī (your mother), O brother, our celebrated father promised to your maternal grandfather the kingdom (of Ayodhya in favour of her issue) as the best price (for the marriage). (3) Nay, propitiated (by standing him in goodstead) in a conflict between the gods and the demons, and immensely delighted, the powerful king, who held sway over the (entire) globe, granted a boon to your mother. (4) Then, binding him with a solemn oath your aforesaid illustrious mother, who was endowed with an excellent complexion, sought (the following) two boons of Daśaratha (the foremost of men), *viz*, (1) rulership for you, O tiger among men, and (2) exile for me; and urged thus, the king granted the aforesaid boons to her. (5-6)

तेन पित्राहमप्यत्र नियुक्तः पुरुषर्षभ । चतुर्दश वने वासं वर्षाणि वरदानिकम् ॥ ७ ॥
सोऽयं वनमिदं प्राप्तो निर्जनं लक्ष्मणान्वितः । सीतया चाप्रतिद्वन्द्वः सत्यवादे स्थितः पितुः ॥ ८ ॥
भवानपि तथेत्येव पितरं सत्यवादिनम् । कर्तुमर्हसि राजेन्द्र क्षिप्रमेवाभिषिञ्चनात् ॥ ९ ॥
ऋणान्मोचय राजानं मत्कृते भरत प्रभुम् । पितरं त्राहि धर्मज्ञ मातरं चाभिनन्दय ॥१०॥
श्रूयते धीमता तात श्रुतिर्गीता यशस्विना । गयेन यजमानेन गयेष्वेव पितॄन् प्रति ॥११॥

पुन्नाम्नो नरकात् यस्मात् पितरं त्रायते सुतः । तस्मात् पुत्र इति प्रोक्तः पितॄन् यः पाति सर्वतः ॥१२॥
एष्टव्या बहवः पुत्रा गुणवन्तो बहुश्रुताः । तेषां वै समवेतानामपि कश्चिद् गयां व्रजेत् ॥१३॥

I, too, O jewel among men, have been enjoined by our aforesaid father to dwell here in the forest for fourteen years in consequence of the boon (granted by our father to your mother). (7) As such I, who have no rival (in this world) and stand by the veracity of my father, have come to this lonely forest accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā. (8) You too, O ruler of kings, ought likewise (as enjoined by our father) to vindicate the truthfulness of your father by getting yourself consecrated (on the throne of Ayodhya) immediately. (9) For my sake, O Bharata, exonerate the powerful king from the debt (he owes to Kaikeyī). Save your father (by redeeming his promise) and delight your mother, O knower of what is right! (10) The following utterance, which is held sacred as a Śruti text, is heard to have been addressed to the manes by the wise and illustrious (king named) Gaya (who is believed to have founded the city of Gayā) while performing sacrifices in the territory of Gaya (the region which is now covered by the district of Gayā):—'Since a son delivers his father from the hell named *Put* he is designated as *Putra.* (According to another interpretation) a son is he who protects his father in all (possible) ways. (11-12) A number of sons, endowed with virtues and versed in many Śāstras, should be desired so that at least one of them may proceed to Gayā (and perform Śrāddha there).' (13)

एवं राजर्षयः सर्वे प्रतीता रघुनन्दन । तस्मात् त्राहि नरश्रेष्ठ पितरं नरकात् प्रभो ॥१४॥
अयोध्यां गच्छ भरत प्रकृतीरुपरञ्जय । शत्रुघ्नसहितो वीर सह सर्वैर्द्विजातिभिः ॥१५॥
प्रवेक्ष्ये दण्डकारण्यमहमप्यविलम्बयन् । आभ्यां तु सहितो वीर वैदेह्या लक्ष्मणेन च ॥१६॥
त्वं राजा भरत भव स्वयं नराणां वन्यानामहमपि राजराण्मृगाणाम् ।
गच्छ त्वं पुरवरमद्य सम्प्रहृष्टः संहृष्टस्त्वहमपि दण्डकान् प्रवेक्ष्ये ॥१७॥
छायां ते दिनकरभाः प्रबाधमानं वर्षत्रं भरत करोतु मूर्ध्नि शीताम् ।
एतेषामहमपि काननद्रुमाणां छायां तामतिशयिनीं शनैः श्रयिष्ये ॥१८॥
शत्रुघ्नस्त्वतुलमतिस्तु ते सहायः सौमित्रिर्मम विदितः प्रधानमित्रम् ।
चत्वारस्तनयवरा वयं नरेन्द्रं सत्यस्थं भरत चराम मा विषीद ॥१९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्ताधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ १०७ ॥

"So did all royal sages believe, O powerful scion of Raghu! Therefore, O jewel among men, protect your father from hell. (14) Accompanied by Śatrughna and together with all Brahmans return, O gallant Bharata, to Ayodhya and protect the people. (15) I too, for my part, accompanied by these two, *viz*, Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) and Lakṣmaṇa, shall enter the Daṇḍaka forest without tarrying (here) any longer. (16) Be you, O Bharata, the ruler of the people themselves. I too shall be the emperor of wild beasts. Return you, extremely delighted, to Ayodhya (the foremost of cities) this (very) day and I too shall enter the Daṇḍaka forest highly rejoiced. (17) Let the (royal) umbrella, O Bharata, repulsing the rays of the sun, spread a cool shade over your head. I too shall gradually seek that dense shade of these forest trees. (18) Let Śatrughna of peerless wisdom for his part be your assistant and the well-known Lakṣmaṇa (son of Sumitrā) be my chief friend. Let us, his four worthy sons, enable the king to adhere to truth. Do not feel dejected." (19)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and seven in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

◆

अष्टाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CVIII

Bharata having been silenced by Śrī Rāma, an eminent sage, Jābāli by name, tries to persuade Śrī Rāma to accept the throne by advocating the theory of the Nāstikas (non-believers) with intent to arouse in him the lust of sovereignty.

आश्वासयन्तं भरतं जाबालिर्ब्राह्मणोत्तमः । उवाच रामं धर्मज्ञं धर्मापेतमिदं वचः ॥ १ ॥
साधु राघव मा भूत् ते बुद्धिरेवं निरर्थिका । प्राकृतस्य नरस्येव ह्यार्यबुद्धेस्तपस्विनः ॥ २ ॥
कः कस्य पुरुषो बन्धुः किमाप्यं कस्य केनचित् । एको हि जायते जन्तुरेक एव विनश्यति ॥ ३ ॥
तस्मान्माता पिता चेति राम सज्जेत यो नरः । उन्मत्त इव स ज्ञेयो नास्ति कश्चिद्धि कस्यचित् ॥ ४ ॥
यथा ग्रामान्तरं गच्छन् नरः कश्चिद् बहिर्वसेत् । उत्सृज्य च तमावासं प्रतिष्ठेतापरेऽहनि ॥ ५ ॥
एवमेव मनुष्याणां पिता माता गृहं वसु । आवासमात्रं काकुत्स्थ सज्जन्ते नात्र सज्जनाः ॥ ६ ॥

To Śrī Rāma, the knower of what is right, (who was) comforting Bharata, Jābāli, a jewel among Brahmans, addressed the following words contrary to (the Vedic) religion:—(1) "You have spoken aright, O scion of Raghu; (but) such a vain resolution, akin to that of an ordinary man, ought not to have been made by you, who are endowed with a noble understanding and given to austerities. (2) No man is the friend of anyone, nor is anything to be gained by anyone through anyone; for alone is a creature born and alone does it perish. (3) Therefore, the man who feels attached to anyone believing that the latter is his mother or father, O Rāma, should be reckoned on a par with a madman; for none is related to another. (4) As while journeying to another (distant) village a man stays abroad (in the course of his journey) and, leaving that resting place (behind), proceeds (further) the next day, even so to men a father, mother, home and wealth are only a (temporary) shelter, O Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha); the wise do not get attached to these. (5-6)

पित्र्यं राज्यं समुत्सृज्य स नार्हसि नरोत्तम । आस्थातुं कापथं दुःखं विषमं बहुकण्टकम् ॥ ७ ॥
समृद्धायामयोध्यायामात्मानमभिषेचय । एकवेणीधरा हि त्वा नगरी सम्प्रतीक्षते ॥ ८ ॥
राजभोगाननुभवन् महार्हान् पार्थिवात्मज । विहर त्वमयोध्यायां यथा शक्रस्त्रिविष्टपे ॥ ९ ॥
न ते कश्चिद् दशरथस्त्वं च तस्य न कश्चन । अन्यो राजा त्वमन्यस्तु तस्मात् कुरु यदुच्यते ॥१०॥
बीजमात्रं पिता जन्तोः शुक्रं शोणितमेव च । संयुक्तमृतुमन्मात्रा पुरुषस्येह जन्म तत् ॥११॥
गतः स नृपतिस्तत्र गन्तव्यं यत्र तेन वै । प्रवृत्तिरेषा भूतानां त्वं तु मिथ्या विहन्यसे ॥१२॥

"Relinquishing the kingdom (of Ayodhya) inherited from your father, O jewel among men, you as such ought not to tread the wrong path, which is painful, rugged and bristling with thorns. (7) Get yourself consecrated on the throne of the prosperous Ayodhya; for the city eagerly awaits your return like a widow (who wears a single braid of hair as a sign of mourning and desolation). (8) Enjoying kingly delights of great value, O prince, sport you in Ayodhya as Indra does in heaven. (9) Daśaratha was none to you nor were you related in any way to him. The king was not you, while you are not the king (Daśaratha); therefore do what is recommended (to you). (10) The father is only an efficient cause of a creature; it is only the sperm and the ovum conjointly retained by a (prospective) mother during the nights favourable for conception that constitute the material cause of a human being in this world. (11) The aforesaid king has departed to the destination where he was bound to go (*viz*, back to the five elements, from which he had sprung up). Such is the natural way of created beings, while you are being harrassed for no purpose. (12)

अर्थधर्मपरा ये ये तांस्ताञ्शोचामि नेतरान् । ते हि दुःखमिह प्राप्य विनाशं प्रेत्य लेभिरे ॥१३॥
अष्टका पितृदेवत्यमित्ययं प्रसृतो जनः । अन्नस्योपद्रवं पश्य मृतो हि किमशिष्यति ॥१४॥
यदि भुक्तमिहान्येन देहमन्यस्य गच्छति । दद्यात् प्रवसतां श्राद्धं न तत् पथ्यशनं भवेत् ॥१५॥
दानसंवनना ह्येते ग्रन्था मेधाविभिः कृताः । यजस्व देहि दीक्षस्व तपस्तप्यस्व संत्यज ॥१६॥
स नास्ति परमित्येतत् कुरु बुद्धिं महामते । प्रत्यक्षं यत् तदातिष्ठ परोक्षं पृष्ठतः कुरु ॥१७॥
सतां बुद्धिं पुरस्कृत्य सर्वलोकनिदर्शिनीम् । राज्यं स त्वं निगृह्णीष्व भरतेन प्रसादितः ॥१८॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ १०८ ॥

"I bewail (only) those whosoever are devoted to wealth and religious merit, not others (who are devoted to sense-enjoyment alone); for having undergone suffering in this life (for the sake of wealth and religious merit) they have met with extermination (even) after death. (13) People here have taken to Śrāddha and other (allied) rites under the belief that Āṣṭakā, (a Śrāddha performed on the seventh, eighth and ninth days of the dark fortnights of the lunar months of Pauṣa, Māgha and Phālguna respectively) and other Śrāddhas are calculated to gratify the manes. Look at the (wanton) waste of food (involved in these rites); for what will a dead man eat? (14) If the food eaten by one man here reaches the body of another (in the other world), one might (as well) offer Śrāddha to those travelling from home; no provisions for journey should be necessary for them. (15) Enjoining us to worship gods, make gifts, get ourselves consecrated for a sacrificial performance, practise austerities and renounce our hearth and home, these books have been written by talented men with a view to exalting charity. (16) Having known this truth, O highly intelligent prince, arrive at the conclusion that there is nothing beyond this (visible) universe. Depend upon that which meets the eye; discard that which is outside the ken of your senses. (17) Respecting the judgment of the wise (who believe that alone which meets the eye to be true),—which serves as an authority for all men,—and propitiated by Bharata, accept you the kingdom." (18)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and eight in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

नवाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CIX

Jābāli explains the reasons for his advocating the theory of Nāstikas to Śrī Rāma, who exposes the hollowness of the ethics propounded by the sage, dubbing it as the very antithesis of Dharma.

जाबालेस्तु वचः श्रुत्वा रामः सत्यपराक्रमः । उवाच परया सूक्त्या बुद्ध्याविप्रतिपन्नया ॥ १ ॥
भवान् मे प्रियकामार्थं वचनं यदिहोक्तवान् । अकार्यं कार्यसंकाशमपथ्यं पथ्यसंनिभम् ॥ २ ॥
निर्मर्यादस्तु पुरुषः पापाचारसमन्वितः । मानं न लभते सत्सु भिन्नचारित्रदर्शनः ॥ ३ ॥
कुलीनमकुलीनं वा वीरं पुरुषमानिनम् । चारित्रमेव व्याख्याति शुचिं वा यदि वाशुचिम् ॥ ४ ॥
अनार्यस्त्वार्यसंस्थानः शौचाद्धीनस्तथा शुचिः । लक्षण्यवदलक्षण्यो दुश्शीलः शीलवानिव ॥ ५ ॥

Hearing the speech of Jābāli, Śrī Rāma, for his part, who was possessed of unfailing prowess, replied (as follows) in the commendable phraseology of the Vedas, armed as he was with a conviction opposed to Jābāli's point of view—(1) "The advice that you have tendered on this occasion in order to make available to me the pleasures of sense, which are agreeable (to all), is not (really) worth following, although appearing as such, and is unwholesome, though appearing as wholesome. (2) A man who has transgressed the bounds of propriety and is characterized by a sinful conduct, and who is wedded to a moral philosophy different from the established ethical doctrines does not get recognition among the wise. (3) Conduct alone proclaims a man to be well-born or otherwise, gallant or only fancying himself to be gallant, honest or dishonest. (4) One following the way of life propounded by you will be ignoble, though appearing as noble, will be accepted as clean, though devoid of cleanliness, would pass for one endowed with auspicious bodily marks, through lacking in such marks, will appear as possessed of an amiable disposition, though ill-mannered. (5)

अधर्मं धर्मवेषेण यद्यहं लोकसंकरम् । अभिपत्स्ये शुभं हित्वा क्रियां विधिविवर्जिताम् ॥ ६ ॥
कश्चेतयानः पुरुषः कार्याकार्यविचक्षणः । बहु मन्येत मां लोके दुर्वृत्तं लोकदूषणम् ॥ ७ ॥
कस्य यास्याम्यहं वृत्तं केन वा स्वर्गमाप्नुयाम् । अनया वर्तमानोऽहं वृत्त्या हीनप्रतिज्ञया ॥ ८ ॥
कामवृत्तोऽन्वयं लोकः कृत्स्नः समुपवर्तते । यद्वृत्ताः सन्ति राजानस्तद्वृत्ताः सन्ति हि प्रजाः ॥ ९ ॥
सत्यमेवानृशंसं च राजवृत्तं सनातनम् । तस्मात् सत्यात्मकं राज्यं सत्ये लोकः प्रतिष्ठितः ॥१०॥

"If I embrace unrighteousness, cloaked in the garb of piety and leading to confusion (or mixture) of castes, I should be giving up the virtuous acts and taking to unauthorized action. (6) What sensible man capable of discerning what ought to be done and what ought not to be done would hold me in high esteem in the world, knowing me to be vile of conduct and a corrupter of the people ? (7) Conducting myself according to the mode of life recommended by you in which my vow (of remaining in exile in woods for fourteen years) has to be abandoned, whose way of life shall I follow (as an ideal) so that I may attain heaven (since you tell me my father was none to me) ? (By following your advice)

I will act according to my own inclination (disregarding the authority of the Śāstras) and, following my example, the whole of this world (too) is likely to turn licentious; for people follow the same way of life as kings do. (8-9) Truthfulness alone, which is divorced from cruelty, is the eternal way of life prescribed for kings. Therefore, truthfulness is the soul of a kingdom; (nay) the world (itself) is founded on truth. (10)

ऋषयश्चैव देवाश्च सत्यमेव हि मेनिरे । सत्यवादी हि लोकेऽस्मिन् परं गच्छति चाक्षयम् ॥११॥
उद्विजन्ते यथा सर्पान्नरादनृतवादिनः । धर्मः सत्यपरो लोके मूलं सर्वस्य चोच्यते ॥१२॥
सत्यमेवेश्वरो लोके सत्ये धर्मः सदाऽऽश्रितः । सत्यमूलानि सर्वाणि सत्यान्नास्ति परं पदम् ॥१३॥
दत्तमिष्टं हुतं चैव तप्तानि च तपांसि च । वेदाः सत्यप्रतिष्ठानास्तस्मात् सत्यपरो भवेत् ॥१४॥
एकः पालयते लोकमेकः पालयते कुलम् । मज्जत्येको हि निरय एकः स्वर्गे महीयते ॥१५॥

"The seers of Vedic Mantras as well as gods have respected truthfulness alone. Indeed a veracious man in this world attains the highest realm, which knows no decay. (11) People turn away in fear from a man telling lies in the same way as they do from a serpent. Virtue has its culmination in truthfulness; nay, it is declared to be the root of all. (12) Truth alone is God in the world, piety ever hinges on truth. All have their root in truth; there is no goal higher than truth. (13) Charity, sacrificial performances, as well as offering oblations into the sacred fire, nay, austerities (actually) practised and the Vedas (studied) have their foundation on truth. Hence one should remain devoted to truth. (14) (According to the degree of virtue and sin practised in one's past lives) one rules over the world, another (simply) supports one's race (alone); a third actually sinks into hell, and (yet) another is respected in heaven. (15)

सोऽहं पितुर्निदेशं तु किमर्थं नानुपालये । सत्यप्रतिश्रवः सत्यं सत्येन समयीकृतम् ॥१६॥
नैव लोभान्न मोहाद्वा न चाज्ञानात् तमोऽन्वितः । सेतुं सत्यस्य भेत्स्यामि गुरोः सत्यप्रतिश्रवः ॥१७॥
असत्यसंधस्य सतश्चलस्यास्थिरचेतसः । नैव देवा न पितरः प्रतीच्छन्तीति नः श्रुतम् ॥१८॥
प्रत्यगात्ममिमं धर्मं सत्यं पश्याम्यहं ध्रुवम् । भारः सत्पुरुषैश्चीर्णस्तदर्थमभिनन्द्यते ॥१९॥
क्षात्रं धर्ममहं त्यक्ष्ये ह्यधर्मं धर्मसंहितम् । क्षुद्रैर्नृशंसैर्लुब्धैश्च सेवितं पापकर्मभिः ॥२०॥

"Wherefore, then, shall I, who know all this, not carry out the behest of my father, which was based on truth and solemnized through swearing by truth, true to (my) promise as I am? (16) Neither from greed (of sovereignty) nor even from infatuation nor again from ignorance shall I, overpowered by obtuseness of understanding, violate the sanctity of my father's pledge (given to mother Kaikeyī), true to my promise (as I am). (17) It has been heard by us that neither gods nor even manes accept the offerings of a man who is not true to his promise, and has (thus) deviated from truth and is of irresolute mind. (18) I recognize this virtue in the form of truthfulness as binding on all embodied beings and foremost. The burden in the form of matted locks has been made much of by good men; hence it is welcomed (by me). (19) I shall certainly renounce the duty of a Kṣatriya (in the shape of assuming the rulership of Ayodhya in violation of my father's injunction), which consists mostly of unrighteousness, though attended with an iota of virtue and which is followed (generally) by petty, cruel and greedy men and those of sinful deeds. (20)

कायेन कुरुते पापं मनसा सम्प्रधार्य तत् । अनृतं जिह्वया चाह त्रिविधं कर्म पातकम् ॥२१॥
भूमिः कीर्तिर्यशो लक्ष्मीः पुरुषं प्रार्थयन्ति हि । सत्यं समनुवर्तन्ते सत्यमेव भजेत् ततः ॥२२॥
श्रेष्ठं ह्यनार्यमेव स्याद् यद् भवानवधार्य माम् । आह युक्तिकरैर्वाक्यैरिदं भद्रं कुरुष्व ह ॥२३॥
कथं ह्यहं प्रतिज्ञाय वनवासमिमं गुरोः । भरतस्य करिष्यामि वचो हित्वा गुरोर्वचः ॥२४॥
स्थिरा मया प्रतिज्ञाता प्रतिज्ञा गुरुसंनिधौ । प्रहृष्टमानसा देवी कैकेयी चाभवत् तदा ॥२५॥

"Having (first) resolved upon a sinful deed with the mind, a man speaks of his vile intention (to his friends and associates) with his tongue and (then) perpetrates it with his body (with the help of others). (In this way) a sinful deed is accomplished in three ways (*viz*, by thought, word and deed). (21) Land, renown, glory and fortune undoubtedly woo a man devoted to truth. The wise pursue truth, hence one should worship truth alone. (22) What you have recommended to me after concluding it to be the best (for me) in (so many) logical words, *viz*, 'this (sovereignty) is good (for you), unhesitatingly accept it', must be unquestionably improper (for me). (23) Having actually given my word of honour to my father to remain in exile in the woods (for fourteen years), as I am doing, how shall I comply with the prayer of Bharata, flouting the command of my father? (24) A solid vow was taken by me in the presence of my father and Queen Kaikeyī felt highly delighted at heart (to hear it) at that moment. (How can I now go back upon my word of honour and cause sorrow to her ?) (25)

वनवासं वसन्नेव शुचिर्नियतभोजनः । मूलपुष्पफलैः पुण्यैः पितॄन् देवांश्च तर्पयन् ॥२६॥
संतुष्टपञ्चवर्गोऽहं लोकयात्रां प्रवाहये । अकुहः श्रद्दधानः सन् कार्याकार्यविचक्षणः ॥२७॥
कर्मभूमिमिमां प्राप्य कर्तव्यं कर्म यच्छुभम् । अग्निर्वायुश्च सोमश्च कर्मणां फलभागिनः ॥२८॥
शतं क्रतूनामाहृत्य देवराट् त्रिदिवं गतः । तपांस्युग्राणि चास्थाय दिवं प्राप्ता महर्षयः ॥२९॥

"Having controlled my diet and propitiating gods as well as manes by means of sacred roots, flowers and fruits while continuing to reside in the forest only and remaining pure of body and mind, with (all) the five senses fully sated, nay, free from (all) viles, devout and fully cognizant of what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, I propose to discharge my worldly obligations (in the form of carrying out the behest of my father). (26-27) Having reached this terrestrial globe (the realm of action), virtuous action alone should be undertaken. The god of fire as well as the wind-god and the moon-god enjoy (in their respective realms) the fruit of their (meritorious) action. (28) Indra (the ruler of gods) was able to attain (the sovereignty of) heaven (only) after performing a hundred sacrifices. The eminent seers of Vedic Mantras too ascended to the ethereal regions (the realms even higher than heaven) after practising rigorous austerities (only)." (29)

अमृष्यमाणः पुनरुग्रतेजा निशम्य तन्नास्तिकवाक्यहेतुम् ।
अथाब्रवीत् तं नृपतेस्तनूजो विगर्हमाणो वचनानि तस्य ॥३०॥
सत्यं च धर्मं च पराक्रमं च भूतानुकम्पां प्रियवादितां च ।
द्विजातिदेवातिथिपूजनं च पन्थानमाहुस्त्रिदिवस्य सन्तः ॥३१॥

तेनैवमाज्ञाय यथावदर्थमेकोदयं सम्प्रतिपद्य विप्राः ।
धर्मं चरन्तः सकलं यथावत् काङ्क्षन्ति लोकागममप्रमत्ताः ॥३२॥
निन्दाम्यहं कर्म कृतं पितुस्तद् यस्त्वामगृह्णाद् विषमस्थबुद्धिम् ।
बुद्ध्यानयैवंविधया चरन्तं सुनास्तिकं धर्मपथादपेतम् ॥३३॥
यथा हि चोरः स तथा हि बुद्धस्तथागतं नास्तिकमत्र विद्धि ।
तस्माद्धि यः शक्यतमः प्रजानां स नास्तिके नाभिमुखो बुधः स्यात् ॥३४॥
त्वत्तो जनाः पूर्वतरे द्विजाश्च शुभानि कर्माणि बहूनि चक्रुः ।
छित्त्वा सदेमं च परं च लोक तस्माद् द्विजाः स्वस्ति कृतं हुतं च ॥३५॥
धर्मे रताः सत्पुरुषैः समेतास्तेजस्विनो दानगुणप्रधानाः ।
अहिंसका वीतमलाश्च लोके भवन्ति पूज्या मुनयः प्रधानाः ॥३६॥

Hearing the plea put forward by the aforesaid sage (Jābāli) in the form of a heretic utterance (denying the life beyond death) and resenting nay, censuring his words, Śrī Rāma (son of King Daśaratha), who was endowed with a formidable spirit, forthwith spoke to him once more (as follows) :—(30) "The sages speak of truthfulness and piety and valour and compassion for created beings and polite speech and worship of Brahmans, gods and unexpected guests as a road to heaven. (31) Scrupulously and duly practising virtue in all its aspects, having in the first instance correctly understood its meaning through the aforesaid utterance (of sages) and reached complete unanimity on the point, Brahmans seek to attain realms of their choice. (32) I denounce the action mentioned below, of my father, who picked up (as his counsellor-priest) you, a staunch unbeliever, who has not only strayed away from the path of righteousness but whose mind is set on a wrong path (opposed to the Vedic path), (nay) who is moving about (in the world) with such an ideology (conforming to the doctrine of the atheistic Chārvāka, who believes only in the world of senses) as has been set forth in your foregoing speech. (33) It is a well-known fact that a follower of Buddha (condemning the Vedas) deserves to be punished precisely in the same way as a thief (inasmuch as a heretic robs people of their faith); and know an unbeliever (a follower of the Chārvāka or materialistic school of philosophy) to be on a par with a Bauddha. Therefore (among such unbelievers) he who is most tameable should undoubtedly be so punished in the interest of the people; in no other case should a wise man (even) stand face to face with an unbeliever (but should shun him). (34) Men that lived before you, as well as Brahmans ever performed numerous blessed deeds (in obedience to the injunctions of the Vedas) giving up all hopes of reward in this world as well as in the next. Hence (following the injunctions of the Vedas) Brahmans pursue harmlessness, truthfulness and other virtues, perform noble deeds (such as practice of austerities, making gifts, doing a good turn to others and so on) and offer oblations into the sacred fire. (35) Foremost sages (like Vasiṣṭha), who are devoted to righteousness, remain in communion with good men, are endowed with spiritual glory have the virtue of munificence predominant in them, practise harmlessness and are entirely free from impurity (of all kinds) become worthy of adoration in the world." (36)

इति ब्रुवन्तं वचनं सरोषं रामं महात्मानमदीनसत्त्वम् ।
उवाच पथ्यं पुनरास्तिकं च सत्यं वचः सानुनयं च विप्रः ॥३७॥

न नास्तिकानां वचनं ब्रवीम्यहं न नास्तिकोऽहं न च नास्ति किंचन ।
समीक्ष्य कालं पुनरास्तिकोऽभवं भवेय काले पुनरेव नास्तिकः ॥३८॥
स चापि कालोऽयमुपागतः शनैर्यथा मया नास्तिकवागुदीरिता ।
निवर्तनार्थं तव राम कारणात् प्रसादनार्थं च मयैतदीरितम् ॥३९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे नवाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ १०९ ॥

To the high-souled Śrī Rāma, who never felt dejected at heart and was speaking angrily as above, the Brahman (Jābāli) now politely addressed the following wholesome and truthful words, which showed his belief in the authority of the Vedas, the other world and so on:—(37) "I do not (as a rule) repeat the words of unbelievers nor am I an unbeliever (at heart) nor is it a fact that nothing exists (beyond this visible universe). Perceiving the time (opportune) for it (now that I find you bent on implementing the pledge given to your father) I have become a believer once more and (to suit the exigencies of the moment) may again pose as an unbeliever when the time comes (for it). (38) That time too had now come when a heretical speech was slowly made by me in order to deflect you (from your purpose of remaining in exile in the forest) and (also) from another motive (*viz*, to establish your reputation as a great believer by evoking your opposition to the heretical view). Again in order to pacify you (when I found you angry) has this (revised) utterance been made by me, O Rāma!" (39)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and nine in the Ayodhya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

दशाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CX

Pacifying Śrī Rāma, who had got angry with Jābāli, Sage Vasiṣṭha urges him to get himself consecrated as king since from Ikṣwāku, the progenitor of his race, downward the eldest son alone had ascended the throne of Ayodhya and because he was not only the eldest of his father's sons, but the ablest too.

क्रुद्धमाज्ञाय रामं तु वसिष्ठः प्रत्युवाच ह । जाबालिरपि जानीते लोकस्यास्य गतागतिम् ॥ १ ॥
निवर्तयितुकामस्तु त्वमेतद् वाक्यमब्रवीत् । इमां लोकसमुत्पत्तिं लोकनाथ निबोध मे ॥ २ ॥
पूर्वं सलिलमेवासीत् पृथिवी तत्र निर्मिता । ततः समभवद् ब्रह्मा स्वयम्भूर्दैवतैः सह ॥ ३ ॥
स वराहस्ततो भूत्वा प्रोज्जहार वसुंधराम् । असृजच्च जगत् सर्वं सह पुत्रैः कृतात्मभिः ॥ ४ ॥
आकाशप्रभवो ब्रह्मा शाश्वतो नित्य अव्ययः । तस्मान्मरीचिः संजज्ञे मरीचेः कश्यपः सुतः ॥ ५ ॥
विवस्वान् कश्यपाज्जज्ञे मनुर्वैवस्वतः स्वयम् । स तु प्रजापतिः पूर्वमिक्ष्वाकुस्तु मनोः सुतः ॥ ६ ॥

Perceiving Śrī Rāma to be angry, Vasiṣṭha too pleaded with him (for Jābāli) as follows:—"Jābāli also recognizes the departure of the human soul (from this world) and its return (to the mortal plane). (1) He, however, spoke to you as aforesaid desirous as he was of persuading you to return (to Ayodhya). (Pray) hear from me about the creation of worlds, O protector of the world ! (2) There was water alone in the beginning of creation, the earth was evolved in water. Next appeared the self-bòrn Brahmā along with gods. (3) Appearing as the Divine Boar, Brahmā (who is the same as Viṣṇu, the Protector) then lifted the earth out of the water (into which it had disappeared) and in conjunction with his sons (Marīchi and others), who had subdued their mind, evolved the whole universe. (4) The eternal, everlasting and imperishable Brahmā sprang out of ether (which is no other than Brahma, the Absolute), from him came forth Marīchi, and Kaśyapa was the son of Marīchi. (5) Vivaswān (the sun-god) descended from Kaśyapa. Manu himself was the son of Vivaswān. Manu for his part was formerly a lord of creation, and Manu's son was Ikṣwāku. (6)

यस्येयं प्रथमं दत्ता समृद्धा मनुना मही । तमिक्ष्वाकुमयोध्यायां राजानं विद्धि पूर्वकम् ॥ ७ ॥
इक्ष्वाकोस्तु सुतः श्रीमान् कुक्षिरित्येव विश्रुतः । कुक्षेरथात्मजो वीर विकुक्षिरुदपद्यत ॥ ८ ॥
विकुक्षेस्तु महातेजा बाणः पुत्रः प्रतापवान् । बाणस्य च महाबाहुरनरण्यो महातपाः ॥ ९ ॥
नानावृष्टिर्बभूवास्मिन् न दुर्भिक्षः सतां वरे । अनरण्ये महाराजे तस्करो वापि कश्चन ॥१०॥
अनरण्यान्महाराज पृथू राजा बभूव ह । तस्मात् पृथोर्महातेजास्त्रिशङ्कुरुदपद्यत ॥११॥
स सत्यवचनाद् वीरः सशरीरो दिवं गतः । त्रिशङ्कोरभवत् सूनुर्धुन्धुमारो महायशाः ॥१२॥

"Know that Ikṣwāku to be the (very) first ruler of Ayodhya, to whom this prosperous earth was entrusted for the first time by (the said) Manu. (7) Ikṣwāku's glorious son for his part became known simply by the name of Kukṣi; and from (the loins of) Kukṣi, O gallant prince, sprang up Vikukṣi. (8) Vikukṣi's son, on the other hand, was the mighty Bāṇa, who was endowed with exceptional glory; and Bāṇa's son was the mighty-armed Anaraṇya, who practised great austerities. (9) So long as this Anaraṇya, who was a jewel among the virtuous, continued to be the emperor, there was neither a drought nor famine nor was a thief to be seen (in Ayodhya). (10) From (the loins of) Anaraṇya, O great king, they say, appeared King Pṛthu; from the said Pṛthu was descended Triśanku, who was possessed of great splendour. (11) Due to the unfailing vow of Viśwāmitra the aforesaid hero bodily ascended to heaven. Triśanku's son was the highly illustrious Dhundhumara. (12)

धुन्धुमारान्महातेजा युवनाश्वो व्यजायत । युवनाश्वसुतः श्रीमान् मांधाता समपद्यत ॥१३॥
मांधातुस्तु महातेजाः सुसंधिरुदपद्यत । सुसंधेरपि पुत्रौ द्वौ ध्रुवसंधिः प्रसेनजित् ॥१४॥
यशस्वी ध्रुवसंधेस्तु भरतो रिपुसूदनः । भरतात् तु महाबाहोरसितो नाम जायत ॥१५॥
यस्यैते प्रतिराजान उदपद्यन्त शत्रवः । हैहयास्तालजङ्घाश्च शूराश्च शशबिन्दवः ॥१६॥
तांस्तु सर्वान् प्रतिव्यूह्य युद्धे राजा प्रवासितः । स च शैलवरे रम्ये बभूवाभिरतो मुनिः ॥१७॥
द्वे चास्य भार्ये गर्भिण्यौ बभूवतुरिति श्रुतिः । तत्र चैका महाभागा भार्गवं देववर्चसम् ॥१८॥
ववन्दे पद्मपत्राक्षी काङ्क्षिणी पुत्रमुत्तमम् । एका गर्भविनाशाय सपत्न्यै गरलं ददौ ॥१९॥

"From (the loins of) Dhundhumāra sprang up Yuvanāśwa, who was endowed with exceptional glory; the glorious Māndhata was born as the son of Yuvanāśwa. (13) Of Māndhātā, again, was born the highly glorious Susandhi; of

Susandhi too there were two sons, Dhruvasandhi and Prasenajit. (14) Bharata, for his part, a destroyer of foes, was the illustrious son of Dhruvasandhi; and of the mighty-armed Bharata was born one Asita by name, of whom the following tributary chiefs, *viz*, the rulers of the Haihayas and the Tālajanghas and the gallant ruler of the Śaśabindus, came to be the enemies. (15-16) In spite of his having arrayed his army against all these the king was (routed and) exiled. He therefore gladly took up his abode as an ascetic on a delightful and excellent mountain. (17) In course of time his two consorts came to be in the family way: so the tradition goes. Desiring to have an excellent son, one of them, who was highly fortunate and had eyes resembling the petals of a lotus, (sought the presence of and) bowed down to Sage Chyavana (son of Bhṛgu), who possessed the splendour of gods; (while) the other administered poison to her co-wife in order to destroy her foetus. (18-19)

भार्गवश्च्यवनो नाम हिमवन्तमुपाश्रितः । तमृषिं साभ्युपागम्य कालिन्दी त्वभ्यवादयत् ॥२०॥
स तामभ्यवदत् प्रीतो वरेप्सुं पुत्रजन्मनि । पुत्रस्ते भविता देवि महात्मा लोकविश्रुतः ॥२१॥
धार्मिकश्च सुभीमश्च वंशकर्तारिसूदनः । श्रुत्वा प्रदक्षिणं कृत्वा मुनिं तमनुमान्य च ॥२२॥
पद्मपत्रसमानाक्षं पद्मगर्भसमप्रभम् । ततः सा गृहमागम्य पत्नी पुत्रमजायत ॥२३॥
सपत्न्या तु गरस्तस्यै दत्तो गर्भजिघांसया । गरेण सह तेनैव तस्मात् स सगरोऽभवत् ॥२४॥
स राजा सगरो नाम यः समुद्रमखानयत् । इष्ट्वा पर्वणि वेगेन त्रासयान इमाः प्रजाः ॥२५॥

"The sage named Chyavana, son of Bhṛgu, had betaken himself to the Himalayas. Approaching that sage, the said Kālindī for her part greeted him. (20) Gratified (to receive her respects), he said to the queen, who sought (from him) a boon ensuring the birth of a son (to her), 'A lofty-minded son, widely known in the world, pious and most formidable, the founder of a dynasty and the destroyer of his foes, will be born to you, O queen !' Hearing this (benediction), and going round the sage clockwise (as a mark of respect) and taking leave of him, and then returning home, the queen brought forth a son who had lotus-like eyes and shone like Brahmā (the lotus-born). (21—23) The boy was born along with that very poison that had actually been administered to the queen by her fellow-consort with the intention of destroying the foetus; hence he became known as Sagara (*lit.*, with poison). (24) 'King Sagara was he who, getting consecrated for a sacrifice on a full-moon day or new moon day, caused the ocean to be dug (by his sons, sixteen thousand in number) causing fear to the people here by the speed of digging. (25)

असमञ्जस्तु पुत्रोऽभूत् सगरस्येति नः श्रुतम् । जीवन्नेव स पित्रा तु निरस्तः पापकर्मकृत् ॥२६॥
अंशुमानपि पुत्रोऽभूदसमञ्जस्य वीर्यवान् । दिलीपोंऽशुमतः पुत्रो दिलीपस्य भगीरथः ॥२७॥
भगीरथात् ककुत्स्थश्च काकुत्स्था येन तु स्मृताः । ककुत्स्थस्य तु पुत्रोऽभूद् रघुर्येन तु राघवाः ॥२८॥
रघोस्तु पुत्रस्तेजस्वी प्रवृद्धः पुरुषादकः । कल्माषपादः सौदास इत्येवं प्रथितो भुवि ॥२९॥
कल्माषपादपुत्रोऽभूच्छङ्खणस्त्विति नः श्रुतम् । यस्तु तद्वीर्यमासाद्य सहसैन्यो व्यनीनशत् ॥३०॥

"It has been heard by us that Sagara's (eldest) son, really speaking, was Asamañja. A perpetrator of sinful deeds (as he was), he, however, was abandoned by his father, even when alive. (26) Aṃśumān, again, who was full of valour, was the son of Asamañja. Dilīpa was the son of Aṃśumān and Bhagīratha, of Dilīpa. (27) Again, from (the loins of) Bhagīratha appeared Kakutstha, after whose name his descendants came to be called Kākutsthas (the scions of Kakutstha). And Kakutstha's son was Raghu, after whom his descendants were known as Rāghavas (the scions of Raghu). (28) Raghu's glorious son for his part came to be known on earth by the names of Pravṛddha, Puruṣādaka (*lit.*, a man-eater or ogre), Kalmāṣapāda and Saudāsa. (29) It has been heard by us that Kalmāṣapāda's son was Śankhaṇa, who, (even) on attaining remarkable valour (on the field of battle) perished, army and all (in an encounter). (30)

शङ्खणस्य तु पुत्रोऽभूच्छूरः श्रीमान् सुदर्शनः । सुदर्शनस्याग्निवर्ण अग्निवर्णस्य शीघ्रगः ॥३१॥
शीघ्रगस्य मरुः पुत्रो मरोः पुत्रः प्रशुश्रुवः । प्रशुश्रुवस्य पुत्रोऽभूदम्बरीषो महामतिः ॥३२॥
अम्बरीषस्य पुत्रोऽभून्नहुषः सत्यविक्रमः । नहुषस्य च नाभागः पुत्रः परमधार्मिकः ॥३३॥
अजश्च सुव्रतश्चैव नाभागस्य सुतावुभौ । अजस्य चैव धर्मात्मा राजा दशरथः सुतः ॥३४॥
तस्य ज्येष्ठोऽसि दायादो राम इत्यभिविश्रुतः । तद् गृहाण स्वकं राज्यमवेक्षस्व जगन्नृप ॥३५॥
इक्ष्वाकूणां हि सर्वेषां राजा भवति पूर्वजः । पूर्वजे नावरः पुत्रो ज्येष्ठो राजाभिषिच्यते ॥३६॥
स राघवाणां कुलधर्ममात्मनः सनातनं नाद्य विहन्तुमर्हसि ।
प्रभूतरत्नामनुशाधि मेदिनीं प्रभूतराष्ट्रां पितृवन्महायशः ॥३७॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे दशाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ ११० ॥

"The glorious Sudarśana for his part was the heroic son of Śankhaṇa. Agnivarṇa was the son of Sudarśana and Śīghraga, of Agnivarṇa. (31) Maru was the son of Śīghraga and Maru's son was Praśuśruva. The highly intelligent Ambarīṣa was the son of Praśuśruva. (32) Nahuṣa of unfailing prowess was the son of Ambarīṣa, while Nābhāga was the supremely pious son of Nahuṣa. (33) Both Aja and Suvrata were the sons of Nābhāga and the pious King Daśaratha was the son of Aja. (34) You are his eldest son known all round by the name of Rāma; therefore accept this kingdom of your own and look after the world, O protector of men! (35) Among all the Ikṣwākus the eldest son undoubtedly becomes the ruler. While an elder son is present a younger son is never consecrated as a king. The eldest alone is so consecrated. (36) Being one of the Rāghavas, you as such ought not to violate today the time-honoured usage of your House (according to which the throne goes to the eldest son alone). Like your father, highly illustrious as you are, rule the earth abounding in precious stones and consisting of numerous dominions." (37)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and ten in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

एकादशाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CXI

Pleading the superiority of a teacher in comparison to one's parents, Sage Vasiṣṭha by virtue of his superiority and as a concession to Bharata, a dependant of Śrī Rāma, whose vow it has been to respect the feelings of his dependants, urges Śrī Rāma to grant the prayer of Bharata. Śrī Rāma, however, contends that one's parents are more worthy of respect even than one's teacher and is accordingly insistent on implementing the pledge already given by him to his father. Thus discomfited in argument, Bharata makes up his mind to undertake a fast unto death as a last resort to exert pressure on him. On Śrī Rāma's dubbing such a step as repugnant to the code of conduct prescribed for a Kṣatriya, Bharata requests his elder brother to allow him to remain in exile in the forest as the latter's proxy. Śrī Rāma, however, rules out this proposition also as something preposterous, saying that one's duty is entrusted to a proxy only on the former's incapacity, which could not be predicated of him, and reaffirms his decision to enter Ayodhya only after fulfilling the pledge given to his father.

वसिष्ठः स तदा राममुक्त्वा राजपुरोहितः । अब्रवीद् धर्मसंयुक्तं पुनरेवापरं वचः ॥ १ ॥
पुरुषस्येह जातस्य भवन्ति गुरवः सदा । आचार्यश्चैव काकुत्स्थ पिता माता च राघव ॥ २ ॥
पिता ह्येनं जनयति पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ । प्रज्ञां ददाति चाचार्यस्तस्मात् स गुरुरुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥
स तेऽहं पितुराचार्यस्तव चैव परंतप । मम त्वं वचनं कुर्वन् नातिवर्तेः सतां गतिम् ॥ ४ ॥
इमा हि ते परिषदो ज्ञातयश्च नृपास्तथा । एषु तात चरन् धर्मं नातिवर्तेः सतां गतिम् ॥ ५ ॥
वृद्धाया धर्मशीलाया मातुर्नार्हस्यवर्तितुम् । अस्या हि वचनं कुर्वन् नातिवर्तेः सतां गतिम् ॥ ६ ॥
भरतस्य वचः कुर्वन् याचमानस्य राघव । आत्मानं नातिवर्तेस्त्वं सत्यधर्मपराक्रम ॥ ७ ॥

Having spoken to Śrī Rāma (as aforesaid) on that occasion, the said Vasiṣṭha, the family priest of the king, addressed (to him) once more the following other words in consonance with righteousness:—(1) "The preceptor, O scion of Kakutstha, as well as one's father and mother, O descendant of Raghu, ever come to be the adored of a man from the time he is born in this world. (2) The father only procreates (and the mother brings forth) a human being, O jewel among men; the preceptor, on the other hand, bestows wisdom on him, hence he is spoken of as Guru (superior even to the parents). (3) I for my part am the preceptor not only of your father but yours too, O chastiser of foes ! Doing my bidding (therefore) you will not be transgressing the path of the virtuous. (4) Here indeed are your subjects, kinsmen and tributary princes too. Discharging your duty by them, you will not be transgressing the path of the virtuous. (5) You ought not to fail in your duty towards your aged mother, who is given to piety. Doing her bidding you will certainly not be transgressing the path of the virtuous. (6) Granting the prayer of Bharata, who is supplicating you, you will not be overstepping your bounds, O scion of Raghu, who are (ever) united with truthfulness, piety and valour !" (7)

एवं मधुरमुक्तः स गुरुणा राघवः स्वयम् । प्रत्युवाच समासीनं वसिष्ठं पुरुषर्षभः ॥ ८ ॥
यन्मातापितरौ वृत्तं तनये कुरुतः सदा । न सुप्रतिकरं तत् तु मात्रा पित्रा च यत्कृतम् ॥ ९ ॥
यथाशक्तिप्रदानेन स्वापनोच्छादनेन च । नित्यं च प्रियवादेन तथा संवर्धनेन च ॥१०॥
स हि राजा दशरथः पिता जनयिता मम । आज्ञापयन्मां यत् तस्य न तन्मिथ्या भविष्यति ॥११॥
एवमुक्ते तु रामेण भरतः प्रत्यनन्तरम् । उवाच विपुलोरस्कः सूतं परमदुर्मनाः ॥१२॥
इह तु स्थण्डिले शीघ्रं कुशानास्तर सारथे । आर्यं प्रत्युपवेक्ष्यामि यावन्मे सम्प्रसीदति ॥१३॥
निराहारो निरालोको धनहीनो यथा द्विजः । शये पुरस्ताच्छालायां यावन्मां प्रतियास्यति ॥१४॥

Instructed thus in sweet words by his preceptor himself, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), a jewel among men, replied (as follows) to Vasiṣṭha, who was sitting at ease (there):—(8) "The service that the parents render to their son by giving him whatever they can, as well as by putting him to bed and rubbing his body with oil etc., nay, by speaking kindly to him every moment and (even) so by nourishing him, nay, whatever (good) is done by them cannot be easily requited. (9-10) Indeed that which the celebrated King Daśaratha, my father, who brought me into being, has asked me to do shall not prove untrue." (11) When Śrī Rāma had spoken thus, Bharata for his part, who was distinguished by a broad chest, and felt extremely sad at heart, commanded as follows Sumantra (the charioteer), who stood nearest to him:—(12) "Speedily spread for your part blades of Kuśa grass on this piece of level ground, O charioteer ! I shall sit at the door of my elder brother in order to exert pressure on him until he gets fully propitiated (and grants my request). (13) Like a destitute Brahman (who has been deprived of his fortune by a debtor failing to repay the debt as stipulated) I shall remain lying down in front of Śrī Rāma's hut without food or drink and depriving myself of light (by covering my face) until he returns to Ayodhya as a concession to me." (14)

स तु राममवेक्षन्तं सुमन्त्रं प्रेक्ष्य दुर्मनाः । कुशोत्तरमुपस्थाप्य भूमावेवास्थितः स्वयम् ॥१५॥
तमुवाच महातेजा रामो राजर्षिसत्तमः । किं मां भरत कुर्वाणं तात प्रत्युपवेक्ष्यसे ॥१६॥
ब्राह्मणो ह्येकपार्श्वेन नरान् रोद्धुमिहार्हति । न तु मूर्धाभिषिक्तानां विधिः प्रत्युपवेशने ॥१७॥
उत्तिष्ठ नरशार्दूल हित्वैतद् दारुणं व्रतम् । पुरवर्यामितः क्षिप्रमयोध्यां याहि राघव ॥१८॥
आसीनस्त्वेव भरतः पौरजानपदं जनम् । उवाच सर्वतः प्रेक्ष्य किमार्यं नानुशासथ ॥१९॥
ते तदोचुर्महात्मानं पौरजानपदा जनाः । काकुत्स्थमभिजानीमः सम्यग् वदति राघवः ॥२०॥
एषोऽपि हि महाभागः पितुर्वचसि तिष्ठति । अत एव न शक्ताः स्मो व्यावर्तयितुमञ्जसा ॥२१॥
तेषामाज्ञाय वचनं रामो वचनमब्रवीत् । एवं निबोध वचनं सुहृदां धर्मचक्षुषाम् ॥२२॥
एतच्चैवोभयं श्रुत्वा सम्यक् सम्पश्य राघव । उत्तिष्ठ त्वं महाबाहो मां च स्पृश तथोदकम् ॥२३॥

Perceiving Sumantra awaiting the pleasure of Śrī Rāma, Bharata for his part sat down disconsolate on the ground spreading a mat of Kuśa grass with his own hands. (15) To him the highly glorious Śrī Rāma, the foremost of royal sages, said, "What (wrong) have I done (to you), O Bharata, that you will sit at my door to exert pressure on me, my darling? (16) A Brahman alone ought to restrain people (oppressing him) by lying on one side (at their door). Kṣatriyas, however, who are (or deserve to be) sprinkled with holy water on the head (when being installed as the head of a state) are not enjoined to sit at the door of anyone (in this way). (17) Get up, O tiger among men! Giving up this terrible vow return, O scion of Raghu, speedily to Ayodhya, the foremost of cities, from this place." (18) Gazing on all sides Bharata, even while sitting, said to the citizens as well as to the people of the country-side, "Wherefore do you not plead with my elder brother?" (19) The people of the city as well as of the country-side then replied as follows to Bharata (an exalted soul):—"We know full well that you (a scion of Raghu) speak aright to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Kakutstha). (20) This highly blessed prince (Śrī Rāma) too sincerely abides by the command of his father. For this very reason we are truly speaking not easily able to divert him (from his purpose)." (21) Hearing their submission Śrī Rāma addressed the following words (to Bharata):—"Listen to the foregoing words of our friends, who have their eyes fixed on what is right. (22) Nay, hearing both these utterances (mine as well as that of these people) weigh them fully, O scion of Raghu. Get you up, O mighty-armed prince, and touch water (in order to sip it) as well as myself (as an indication of your resolve to break the vow that you have just taken)." (23)

अथोत्थाय जलं स्पृष्ट्वा भरतो वाक्यमब्रवीत् । शृण्वन्तु मे परिषदो मन्त्रिणः शृणुयुस्तथा ॥२४॥
न याचे पितरं राज्यं नानुशासामि मातरम् । एवं परमधर्मज्ञं नानुजानामि राघवम् ॥२५॥
यदि त्ववश्यं वस्तव्यं कर्तव्यं च पितुर्वचः । अहमेव निवत्स्यामि चतुर्दश वने समाः ॥२६॥
धर्मात्मा तस्य सत्येन भ्रातुर्वाक्येन विस्मितः । उवाच रामः सम्प्रेक्ष्य पौरजानपदं जनम् ॥२७॥
विक्रीतमाहितं क्रीतं यत् पित्रा जीवता मम । न तल्लोपयितुं शक्यं मया वा भरतेन वा ॥२८॥
उपाधिर्न मया कार्यो वनवासे जुगुप्सितः । युक्तमुक्तं च कैकेय्या पित्रा मे सुकृतं कृतम् ॥२९॥
जानामि भरतं क्षान्तं गुरुसत्कारकारिणम् । सर्वमेवात्र कल्याणं सत्यसंधे महात्मनि ॥३०॥
अनेन धर्मशीलेन वनात् प्रत्यागतः पुनः । भ्रात्रा सह भविष्यामि पृथिव्याः पतिरुत्तमः ॥३१॥
वृतो राजा हि कैकेय्या मया तद्वचनं कृतम् । अनृतान्मोचयानेन पितरं तं महीपतिम् ॥३२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकादशाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥१११॥

Getting up immediately and touching water, Bharata spoke as follows:—"Let (all) the members of this assembly hear me. Let the (king's) counsellors too listen. (24) I never begged sovereignty of my father nor did I instruct my mother to do it (on my behalf). Nor did I approve of this step of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), (*viz*, that he should go into exile for fourteen years, he knows best what is right. (25) If the behest of our father must be carried out and if one must live in the forest at all events, I myself shall do so for (a period of) fourteen years." (26) Fixing his gaze on the citizens (of Ayodhya) as well as on the people of the country-side, Śrī Rāma, whose mind is set on righteousness and who felt astonished at the sincere vow of his aforesaid brother, said, "The sale, deposit or purchase effected by our father while alive cannot be nullified either by me or (even) by Bharata. (27-28) No proxy should be sent by me into exile in the woods; for that would be a matter for reproach (since a proxy is allowed only in case the man replaced by him is unable to discharge the obligation imposed on him). The demand of Kaikeyī was (but) reasonable (inasmuch as it was based firstly on the stipulation made by the king while marrying Kaikeyī that a son born to her alone would succeed him on the throne, and secondly on the debt the former owed to her for the invaluable service rendered by her on the field of battle); and (only) a virtuous act was done by our father (in granting the boons asked by her). (29) I know Bharata to be forgiving (by nature) and fond of paying respects to his elders. Indeed all will be well with this high-souled prince, who is true to his promise. (30) When returned from the forest I shall indeed become the paramount ruler of the earth with this pious brother (of mine). (31) As the king was solicited for a boon by Kaikeyī his pledge (given to her) has been implemented by me (by being in exile in the forest). (Now) acquit the said king, our father, of (the charge of) falsehood by ruling over Ayodhya (and thereby discharging your part of the obligation)." (32)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and eleven in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

द्वादशाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CXII

Collected in the heavens to hear the dialogue of Bharata and Śrī Rāma, heavenly beings applaud the two brothers. Having decided upon his course of action, Śrī Rāma turns his face towards his hut; while pleading his inability to protect the kingdom, now that his attempts to take Śrī Rāma back to Ayodhya had been frustrated, Bharata prays to Śrī Rāma for mercy once more. But when he comes to know that his elder brother cannot be made to swerve an inch from his vow, he places a new pair of wooden sandals decked with gold in front of his brother and requests him to place his feet on them. Readily acceding to his request, Śrī Rāma hands over the sandals to Bharata, who takes a vow before the former to enter the fire in case he did not return immediately after the expiry of his term of exile. Śrī Rāma confirms his vow and after embracing Bharata and Śatrughna and bidding good-bye to all with due respect according to the rank of each, enters his cottage.

तमप्रतिमतेजोभ्यां भ्रातृभ्यां रोमहर्षणम् । विस्मिताः संगमं प्रेक्ष्य समुपेता महर्षयः ॥ १ ॥

अन्तर्हिता मुनिगणाः स्थिताश्च परमर्षयः । तौ भ्रातरौ महाभागौ काकुत्स्थौ प्रशशंसिरे ॥ २ ॥
सदाऽऽर्यौ राजपुत्रौ द्वौ धर्मज्ञौ धर्मविक्रमौ । श्रुत्वा वयं हि सम्भाषामुभयोः स्पृहयामहे ॥ ३ ॥
ततस्त्वृषिगणाः क्षिप्रं दशग्रीववधैषिणः । भरतं राजशार्दूलमित्यूचुः संगता वचः ॥ ४ ॥
कुले जात महाप्राज्ञ महावृत्त महायशः । ग्राह्यं रामस्य वाक्यं ते पितरं यद्यवेक्षसे ॥ ५ ॥
सदानृणमिमं रामं वयमिच्छामहे पितुः । अनृणत्वाच्च कैकेय्याः स्वर्गं दशरथो गतः ॥ ६ ॥

The eminent sages who had assembled (there) were astonished to behold at close quarters that thrilling meeting of the two brothers (Śrī Rāma and Bharata), who were endowed with matchless glory. (1) Hosts of sages who stood invisible (in the air) and most eminent Ṛṣis (bodily) present (there) applauded (in the following words) those two highly blessed brothers, Śrī Rāma and Bharata (the scions of Kakutstha):—(2) "Ever noble are the two princes (Śrī Rāma and Bharata), who not only know what is right but also tread the path of virtue. Indeed, having heard the dialogue of the two, we long to hear it (again and again)." (3) Then the hosts of Ṛṣis for their part, who longed for the death of Rāvaṇa, hastily addressed with one voice the following exhortation to Bharata, a tiger among princes:—(4) "O prince of high birth, (nay) endowed with exceptional intelligence, distinguished by a noble conduct and enjoying great renown, the advice of Śrī Rāma ought to be accepted by you, if you have (the least) regard for your father. (5) We wish to see Śrī Rāma absolved for ever from (all) obligations to his father; for due to his getting square with Kaikeyī (as a result of Śrī Rāma's having readily offered to be in exile) King Daśaratha has ascended to heaven." (6)

एतावदुक्त्वा वचनं गन्धर्वाः समहर्षयः । राजर्षयश्चैव तथा सर्वे स्वां स्वां गतिं गताः ॥ ७ ॥
ह्लादितस्तेन वाक्येन शुशुभे शुभदर्शनः । रामः संहृष्टवदनस्तानृषीनभ्यपूजयत् ॥ ८ ॥
त्रस्तगात्रस्तु भरतः स वाचा सज्जमानया । कृताञ्जलिरिदं वाक्यं राघवं पुनरब्रवीत् ॥ ९ ॥
राम धर्ममिमं प्रेक्ष्य कुलधर्मानुसंततम् । कर्तुमर्हसि काकुत्स्थ मम मातुश्च याचनाम् ॥१०॥
रक्षितुं सुमहद् राज्यमहमेकस्तु नोत्सहे । पौरजानपदांश्चापि रक्तान् रञ्जयितुं तथा ॥११॥
ज्ञातयश्चापि योधाश्च मित्राणि सुहृदश्च नः । त्वामेव हि प्रतीक्षन्ते पर्जन्यमिव कर्षकाः ॥१२॥
इदं राज्यं महाप्राज्ञ स्थापय प्रतिपद्य हि । शक्तिमान् स हि काकुत्स्थ लोकस्य परिपालने ॥१३॥

Having uttered these few words, the Gandharvas along with the eminent sages as well as the royal sages and all (others) went each his own way. (7) Gladdened by this observation, Śrī Rāma of blessed appearance looked brighter. (Nay) his face thrilled with joy, he duly extolled the aforesaid Ṛṣis. (8) The celebrated Bharata for his part, whose limbs were seized with a tremor, made the following submission to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) with joined palms in faltering accents:—(9) "Fully considering, O Rāma, this sacred obligation (of getting yourself consecrated for the rulership of Ayodhya and protecting the people), (which is also) linked with our family usage, you ought to fulfil it, O scion of Kakutstha, and grant my prayer as well as that of your mother (Kausalyā). (10) I for my part cannot protect the vast dominion single-handed, nor can I please the citizens and the people of the country-side, (so) devoted to you. (11) Indeed our kinsmen, nay, warriors, friends and relations too wait for you alone as cultivators do for the rumbling cloud. (12) Accepting the kingdom, O highly intelligent brother, actually place it on a sound footing. Such as you are, you are capable of protecting the people on all sides, O scion of Kakutstha !" (13)

एवमुक्त्वापतद् भ्रातुः पादयोर्भरतस्तदा । भृशं सम्प्रार्थयामास राघवेऽतिप्रियं वदन् ॥१४॥
तमङ्के भ्रातरं कृत्वा रामो वचनमब्रवीत् । श्यामं नलिनपत्राक्षं मत्तहंसस्वरः स्वयम् ॥१५॥
आगता त्वामियं बुद्धिः स्वजा वैनयिकी च या । भृशमुत्सहसे तात रक्षितुं पृथिवीमपि ॥१६॥
अमात्यैश्च सुहृद्भिश्च बुद्धिमद्भिश्च मन्त्रिभिः । सर्वकार्याणि सम्मन्त्र्य महान्त्यपि हि कारय ॥१७॥
लक्ष्मीश्चन्द्रादपेयाद् वा हिमवान् वा हिमं त्यजेत् । अतीयात् सागरो वेलां न प्रतिज्ञामहं पितुः ॥१८॥
कामाद् वा तात लोभाद् वा मात्रा तुभ्यमिदं कृतम् । न तन्मनसि कर्तव्यं वर्तितव्यं च मातृवत् ॥१९॥

Saying so, Bharata then fell at the feet of his (elder) brother and made a fervent appeal to him (to accept the sovereignty), speaking in most endearing tones to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (14) Placing on his lap the aforesaid brother (Bharata), who was dark-brown (of complexion) and had eyes resembling the petals of a lotus, Śrī Rāma, who was himself endowed with a voice resembling the cackling of a swan in rut, replied (to him) as follows:—(15) "You can very well protect even the earth (to say nothing of Ayodhya) through this innate wisdom (in the shape of under-estimation of your worth) born of humility, that has dawned on you, my darling ! (16) Nay, coolly deliberating with your ministers, friends and wise counsellors too, get through even your major concerns. (17) Splendour would sooner depart from the moon, nay, the Himalaya mountain would sooner shed its snow and the ocean would sooner transgress its limits than I shall violate the plighted word of my father. (18) No matter whether (all) this was wrought by your mother in your interest from affection (for you) or from greed of sovereignty (through your installation as Prince-Regent), my darling, it should not be taken to heart by you and you should behave towards her as towards a mother." (19)

एवं ब्रुवाणं भरतः कौसल्यासुतमब्रवीत् । तेजसाऽऽदित्यसंकाशं प्रतिपच्चन्द्रदर्शनम् ॥२०॥
अधिरोहार्य पादाभ्यां पादुके हेमभूषिते । एते हि सर्वलोकस्य योगक्षेमं विधास्यतः ॥२१॥
सोऽधिरुह्य नरव्याघ्रः पादुके व्यवमुच्य च । प्रायच्छत् सुमहातेजा भरताय महात्मने ॥२२॥
स पादुके सम्प्रणम्य रामं वचनमब्रवीत् । चतुर्दश हि वर्षाणि जटाचीरधरो ह्यहम् ॥२३॥
फलमूलाशनो वीर भवेयं रघुनन्दन । तवागमनमाकाङ्क्षन् वसन् वै नगराद् बहिः ॥२४॥
तव पादुकयोर्न्यस्य राज्यतन्त्रं परंतप । चतुर्दशे हि सम्पूर्णे वर्षेऽहनि रघूत्तम ॥२५॥
न द्रक्ष्यामि यदि त्वां तु प्रवेक्ष्यामि हुताशनम् ।

To Śrī Rāma (the son of Kausalyā),—who was speaking as aforesaid, nay, who vied with the sun in glory, and who was pleasing to the sight as the new moon (appearing on the first day of a bright fortnight),—Bharata replied (as follows):—(20) "(Pray) stand with your feet on the (pair of) wooden sandals embellished with gold (placed before you), O noble brother! Surely these will supply the needs and ensure the safety of men." (21) Placing his feet on the sandals and (immediately) leaving them, Śrī Rāma, a tiger among men, who was endowed with exceptional glory, gave them to the high-souled Bharata. (22) Reverentially bowing down to the wooden sandals, he spoke as follows to Śrī Rāma:—"Indeed, having relegated the burden of rulership to the wooden sandals, O gallant brother, I should like to live on fruits and roots alone for fourteen years, O delight of the Raghus, wearing matted locks (on my head) and the bark of trees (on my person) and actually dwelling outside the city, longing for your return (to the capital), O scorcher of enemies! If, however, when the fourteenth year (of your exile) has fully ended, O jewel among the Raghus, I do not see you (returned to Ayodhya) the following day, I for my part shall enter the fire once for all."

तथेति च प्रतिज्ञाय तं परिष्वज्य सादरम् ॥२६॥
शत्रुघ्नं च परिष्वज्य वचनं चेदमब्रवीत् । मातरं रक्ष कैकेयीं मा रोषं कुरु तां प्रति ॥२७॥
मया च सीतया चैव शप्तोऽसि रघुनन्दन । इत्युक्त्वाश्रुपरीताक्षो भ्रातरं विससर्ज ह ॥२८॥
स पादुके ते भरतः स्वलंकृते महोज्ज्वले सम्परिगृह्य धर्मवित् ।
प्रदक्षिणं चैव चकार राघवं चकार चैवोत्तमनागमूर्धनि ॥२९॥
अथानुपूर्व्या प्रतिपूज्य तं जनं गुरूंश्च मन्त्रीन् प्रकृतीस्तथानुजौ ।
व्यसर्जयद् राघववंशवर्धनः स्थितः स्वधर्मे हिमवानिवाचलः ॥३०॥
तं मातरो बाष्पगृहीतकण्ठ्यो दुःखेन नामन्त्रयितुं हि शेकुः ।
स चैव मातॄरभिवाद्य सर्वा रुदन् कुटीं स्वां प्रविवेश रामः ॥३१॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे द्वादशाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ ११२ ॥

Giving his approval in the words "So be it!" and embracing Bharata with love, nay, embracing Śatrughna as well, Śrī Rāma spoke as follows:—"Take care of mother Kaikeyī; be not angry with her. (23—27) You are (hereby) adjured to do so by me as well as by Sītā, O delight of the Raghus!" Saying so, his eyes suffused with tears, Śrī Rāma bade good-bye to Bharata. (28) Receiving with reverence the aforesaid pair of exceedingly bright-ornate wooden sandals, the celebrated Bharata, who knew what is right, went clockwise round Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) and further placed the pair on the head of an excellent elephant. (29) Then, paying respects in the order of precedence to (all) those men (who had gathered there) as well as to his preceptors, counsellors, subjects and two younger brothers (Bharata and Śatrughna, who were going to Ayodhya), Śrī Rāma (the promoter of Raghu's race),—who stood by his duty unshaken like the Himalaya mountain, sent them away. (30) His mothers, whose throat was choked with tears through agony, could not even speak to him. Greeting all his mothers, the celebrated Śrī Rāma too re-entered his hut weeping. (31)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and twelve in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

त्रयोदशाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CXIII

Departed back for Ayodhya along with Sage Vasiṣṭha and others, Bharata pays his respects on the way to Sage Bharadwāja and, apprising him of what had happened at Chitrakoot and also of the pair of wooden sandals that he had received from Śrī Rāma as the latter's representative, and proceeding further, crosses the rivers Ganga and Yamuna along with his followers. Departing from Śṛngaverapura he catches sight of Ayodhya and points out to Sumantra its gloomy appearance.

ततः शिरसि कृत्वा तु पादुके भरतस्तदा । आरुरोह रथं हृष्टः शत्रुघ्नेन समन्वितः ॥ १ ॥
वसिष्ठो वामदेवश्च जाबालिश्च दृढव्रतः । अग्रतः प्रययुः सर्वे मन्त्रिणो मन्त्रपूजिताः ॥ २ ॥
मन्दाकिनीं नदीं रम्यां प्राङ्मुखास्ते ययुस्तदा । प्रदक्षिणं च कुर्वाणाश्चित्रकूटं महागिरिम् ॥ ३ ॥
पश्यन् धातुसहस्राणि रम्याणि विविधानि च । प्रययौ तस्य पार्श्वेन ससैन्यो भरतस्तदा ॥ ४ ॥
अदूराच्चित्रकूटस्य ददर्श भरतस्तदा । आश्रमं यत्र स मुनिर्भरद्वाजः कृतालयः ॥ ५ ॥

Then, placing the pair of wooden sandals on his head, Bharata for his part, full of joy and accompanied by Śatrughna, forthwith ascended the chariot. (1) The counsellors, Vasiṣṭha and Vāmadeva and Jābāli of steadfast vows and all (others), adored for their (sage) counsel, travelled in the forefront. (2) Keeping the lovely river Mandākinī and the great Chitrakooṭ mountain to their right they then departed with their face turned towards the east. (3) Seeing (on the way) thousands of minerals of every description, which were charming too, Bharata, accompanied by his army, now proceeded along the (northern) side of the aforesaid mountain. (4) Not far from Chitrakoot Bharata now beheld the hermitage in which Sage Bharadwāja had taken up his abode.* (5)

स तमाश्रममागम्य भरद्वाजस्य वीर्यवान् । अवतीर्य रथात् पादौ ववन्दे कुलनन्दनः ॥ ६ ॥
ततो हृष्टो भरद्वाजो भरतं वाक्यमब्रवीत् । अपि कृत्यं कृतं तात रामेण च समागतम् ॥ ७ ॥
एवमुक्तः स तु ततो भरद्वाजेन धीमता । प्रत्युवाच भरद्वाजं भरतो धर्मवत्सलः ॥ ८ ॥

---

* From the above verse it transpires that there existed in those times a hermitage of Sage Bharadwāja on the southern bank of the Yamuna as well, not far away from Chitrakoot. The hermitage existing between the Ganga and Yamuna rivers, where Śrī Rāma and his party halted and where Bharata and his entourage were sumptuously entertained appears to be different from that referred to here. The fact of Bharata and his followers having crossed the Yamuna after taking leave of Bharadwāja (mentioned in verse 21 below) seems to warrant this conclusion. The sage must in all probability have shifted since to the former place in order to keep himself in touch with what was going on at Chitrakoot.

स याच्यमानो गुरुणा मया च दृढविक्रमः । राघवः परमप्रीतो वसिष्ठं वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥ ९ ॥
पितुः प्रतिज्ञां तामेव पालयिष्यामि तत्त्वतः । चतुर्दश हि वर्षाणि या प्रतिज्ञा पितुर्मम ॥१०॥

Reaching the said hermitage of Bharadwāja and alighting from his chariot, the valiant Bharata, the delight of his race, saluted the sage's feet. (6) Full of delight, Bharadwāja thereupon spoke to Bharata as follows:—"Did you meet Śrī Rāma my darling, and has your purpose been accomplished ?" (7) Questioned thus by the wise Bharadwāja, the celebrated Bharata for his part, who was lovingly devoted to righteousness, then replied to Bharadwāja as follows:—(8) "Supremely delighted on being solicited by my preceptor and myself (to return to Ayodhya), the celebrated Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) of unrelenting prowess replied to Vasiṣṭha as follows:—(9) 'I shall without doubt unequivocally implement that pledge of my father (given to my mother Kaikeyī), which was to the effect that I should remain in exile actually for fourteen years.' (10)

एवमुक्तो महाप्राज्ञो वसिष्ठः प्रत्युवाच ह । वाक्यज्ञो वाक्यकुशलं राघवं वचनं महत् ॥११॥
एते प्रयच्छ संहृष्टः पादुके हेमभूषिते । अयोध्यायां महाप्राज्ञ योगक्षेमकरो भव ॥१२॥
एवमुक्तो वसिष्ठेन राघवः प्राङ्मुखः स्थितः । पादुके हेमविकृते मम राज्याय ते ददौ ॥१३॥
निवृत्तोऽहमनुज्ञातो रामेण सुमहात्मना । अयोध्यामेव गच्छामि गृहीत्वा पादुके शुभे ॥१४॥
एतच्छ्रुत्वा शुभं वाक्यं भरतस्य महात्मनः । भरद्वाजः शुभतरं मुनिर्वाक्यमुदाहरत् ॥१५॥

"Spoken to as aforesaid, the highly enlightened Vasiṣṭha, who knows how to speak, actually addressed the following momentous words to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), who is an adept in expression:—(11) 'Full of great delight (please) gift these wooden sandals, decked with gold (to Bharata). (Existing in the form of these sandals) supply the needs of the people in Ayodhya and safeguard their interests, O highly intelligent prince!' (12) Requested in these words by Vasiṣṭha, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) stood (on the sandals) facing the east and allowed me to take the aforesaid pair of wooden sandals, adorned with gold, for carrying on the rule (on his behalf). (13) Departed as permitted by the exceptionally high souled Śrī Rāma, I am returning to Ayodhya itself taking the blessed pair of sandals (with me)." (14) Hearing this happy report of the high-souled Bharata, Sage Bharadwāja made the following reply, which was (still) more agreeable (to hear):—(15)

नैतच्चित्रं नरव्याघ्रे शीलवृत्तविदां वरे । यदार्यं त्वयि तिष्ठेत्तु निम्नोत्सृष्टमिवोदकम् ॥१६॥
अनृणः स महाबाहुः पिता दशरथस्तव । यस्य त्वमीदृशः पुत्रो धर्मात्मा धर्मवत्सलः ॥१७॥
तमृषिं तु महाप्राज्ञमुक्तवाक्यं कृताञ्जलिः । आमन्त्रयितुमारेभे चरणावुपगृह्य च ॥१८॥
ततः प्रदक्षिणं कृत्वा भरद्वाजं पुनः पुनः । भरतस्तु ययौ श्रीमानयोध्यां सह मन्त्रिभिः ॥१९॥
यानैश्च शकटैश्चैव हयैर्नागैश्च सा चमूः । पुनर्निवृत्ता विस्तीर्णा भरतस्यानुयायिनी ॥२०॥

"It is no wonder that, (even) as water discharged (from above) collects into a depression, noble conduct for its part should find its place in you, a tiger among men and the foremost of those who know how to behave well and conduct themselves with propriety. (16) Free from (all) debt is your mighty-armed father, the celebrated Daśaratha, of whom was born such a pious son as you, fondly devoted to virtue." (17) Bharata for his part stood with joined palms before the highly wise Ṛṣi (Sage Bharadwāja), who had spoken as above, and clasping his feet, proceeded to take leave of him. (18) Going clockwise round Bharadwāja (as a mark of respect) again and again, the glorious Bharata for his part then left for Ayodhya along with his counsellors. (19) That large army following Bharata returned along the same route on chariots and bullock-carts as well as on horseback and on (the back of) elephants. (20)

ततस्ते यमुनां दिव्यां नदीं तीर्त्वोर्मिमालिनीम् । ददृशुस्तां पुनः सर्वे गङ्गां शिवजलां नदीम् ॥२१॥
तां रम्यजलसम्पूर्णां संतीर्य सहबान्धवः । शृङ्गवेरपुरं रम्यं प्रविवेश ससैनिकः ॥२२॥
शृङ्गवेरपुराद् भूय अयोध्यां संददर्श ह । अयोध्यां तु तदा दृष्ट्वा पित्रा भ्रात्रा विवर्जिताम् ॥२३॥
भरतो दुःखसंतप्तः सारथिं चेदमब्रवीत् । सारथे पश्य विध्वस्ता अयोध्या न प्रकाशते ॥२४॥
निराकारा निरानन्दा दीना प्रतिहतस्वना ॥२५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे त्रयोदशाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ ११३ ॥

Having crossed the divine river Yamuna, adorned with a succession of waves, they all then beheld once more the river Ganga, containing holy waters. (21) Having easily crossed with his kinsfolk the aforesaid river, which was brimful with delightful waters, Bharata (with his army men) duly entered the lovely (town of) Śṛngaverapura. (22) Proceeding from Śṛngaverapura he vividly saw Ayodhya once more: so the tradition goes. Seeing Ayodhya deserted by his father and (elder) brother (Śrī Rāma), Bharata for his part felt sore stricken with agony at that moment and spoke as follows to the (charioteer Sumantra):— "Look, O charioteer! Desolate and shorn of its grace, bereft of joy, wretched and noiseless, Ayodhya does not look bright (as before)." (23—25)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and thirteen in the Ayodhya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

* * *

चतुर्दशाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CXIV

Vālmīki portrays the gloomy appearance of Ayodhya with the help of a number of similes. Bharata enters his father's palace with a heavy heart speaking to Sumantra about the sorry spectacle which Ayodhya presented at the moment.

स्निग्धगम्भीरघोषेण स्यन्दनेनोपयान् प्रभुः । अयोध्यां भरतः क्षिप्रं प्रविवेश महायशाः ॥ १ ॥
बिडालोलूकचरितामालीननरवारणाम् । तिमिराभ्याहतां कालीमप्रकाशां निशामिव ॥ २ ॥
राहुशत्रोः प्रियां पत्नीं श्रिया प्रज्वलितप्रभाम् । ग्रहेणाभ्युदितेनैकां रोहिणीमिव पीडिताम् ॥ ३ ॥
अल्पोष्णक्षुब्धसलिलां घर्मतप्तविहंगमाम् । लीनमीनझषग्राहां कृशां गिरिनदीमिव ॥ ४ ॥
विधूमामिव हेमाभां शिखामग्नेः समुत्थिताम् । हविरभ्युक्षितां पश्चाच्छिखां विप्रलयं गताम् ॥ ५ ॥
विध्वस्तकवचां रुग्णगजवाजिरथध्वजाम् । हतप्रवीरामापन्नां चमूमिव महाहवे ॥ ६ ॥

Journeying forth in a chariot which produced an agreeable deep sound, the powerful and highly illustrious Bharata duly entered Ayodhya in no time. (1) Haunted by cats and owls, obscured by darkness and devoid of light, with the house-doors of its men closed, the city presented the appearance of a dark night. (2) It looked desolate like Rohiṇī, the beloved consort of the moon-god (treated as an enemy by the demon Rāhu*), tormented (in the form of her spouse whose better half she is) by the planet Rāhu in the ascendant, though (ordinarily) invested with an exceedingly bright splendour by virtue of her glory. (3) It (further) looked attenuated like a mountain-stream whose scanty waters had become hot and agitated (due to the rays of the sun), birds living in which were scorched by the sun and whose fish, small and big, and alligators had disappeared (into the mire). (4) It resembled a fully developed tongue of fire, devoid of smoke and bright as gold, later reduced to extinction when sprinkled all over with milk. (5) It looked like an army which and met with reverses in a major conflict—whose armours had been shattered, whose ensigns borne on elephants, horses and chariots had been torn and whose foremost heroes had been killed. (6)

सफेनां सस्वनां भूत्वा सागरस्य समुत्थिताम् । प्रशान्तमारुतोद्धूतां जलोर्मिमिव निःस्वनाम् ॥ ७ ॥
त्यक्तां यज्ञायुधैः सर्वैरभिरूपैश्च याजकैः । सुत्याकाले सुनिर्वृत्ते वेदिं गतरवामिव ॥ ८ ॥
गोष्ठमध्ये स्थितामार्तामचरन्तीं नवं तृणम् । गोवृषेण परित्यक्तां गवां पत्नीमिवोत्सुकाम् ॥ ९ ॥
प्रभाकराद्यैः सुस्निग्धैः प्रज्वलद्भिरिवोत्तमैः । वियुक्तां मणिभिर्जात्यैर्नवां मुक्तावलीमिव ॥१०॥
सहसाचरितां स्थानान्महीं पुण्यक्षयाद् गताम् । संहृतद्युतिविस्तारां तारामिव दिवश्च्युताम् ॥११॥
पुष्पनद्धां वसन्तान्ते मत्तभ्रमरशालिनीम् । द्रुतदावाग्निविप्लुष्टां क्लान्तां वनलतामिव ॥१२॥

It presented the appearance of an oceanic wave which, though tossed very high (by a strong gale) with foam and a roar, is rendered noiseless when stirred by a quiet wind. (7) It resembled an altar which, when the period of offering oblations into the sacred fire has completely expired, has been cleared of all sacrificial implements and deserted by the learned priests, and where all noise has (consequently) ceased. (8) It looked like a cow fit to be covered by bulls and longing for copulation but bereft of an excellent bull and standing disconsolate in a cow-pen, refusing to feed on fresh grass. (9) It (further) resembled a new necklace of pearls stripped of its highly polished, dazzling, excellent rubies and other gems of superior quality. (10) (Again) it presented the appearance of a meteor suddenly shifted from its position and fallen from the heavens, and (consequently) shorn of its expanse of light when descended on earth through exhaustion of its merit. (11) It (further) looked blighted in appearance like a forest creeper laden with blossom at the close of spring and appearing lovely with drunken bees (surrounding it) but (later on) scorched by a raging wild fire. (12)

---

* The demon presiding over a planet of the same name figuring in Indian astronomy and identified by modern astronomy with the shadow of the earth cast on the orb of the moon during what is known as a lunar eclipse.

सम्मूढनिगमां सर्वां संक्षिप्तविपणापणाम् । प्रच्छन्नशशिनक्षत्रां द्यामिवाम्बुधरैर्युताम् ॥१३॥
क्षीणपानोत्तमैर्भग्नैः शरावैरभिसंवृताम् । हतशौण्डामिव ध्वस्तां पानभूमिमसंस्कृताम् ॥१४॥
वृक्णभूमितलां निम्नां वृक्णपात्रैः समावृताम् । उपयुक्तोदकां भग्नां प्रपां निपतितामिव ॥१५॥
विपुलां विततां चैव युक्तपाशां तरस्विनाम् । भूमौ बाणैर्विनिष्कृत्तां पतितां ज्यामिवायुधात् ॥१६॥
सहसा युद्धशौण्डेन हयारोहेण वाहिताम् । निहतां प्रतिसैन्येन वड़वामिव पातिताम् ॥१७॥
भरतस्तु रथस्थः सञ्श्रीमान् दशरथात्मजः । वाहयन्तं रथश्रेष्ठं सारथिं वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥१८॥

The entire city with its trafficless streets and markets carrying on a dull business resembled a cloudy sky with the moon and (other) stars obscured. (13) (With its streets and lanes unswept and full of rubbish) Ayodhya presented the appearance of a deserted and uncleaned tavern strewn with broken vessels devoid of any excellent liquor, the wine-drinkers having been killed. (14) (Again) it looked like a shed erected for storage and distribution of water, but now broken and collapsed with its platform razed and sunk, and covered with broken vessels, its water having been used up. (15) It (further) resembled a bow-string, broad and long (extended over the entire length of a bow), with a noose at both ends (in order to fasten it to the bow), severed from the bow by the arrows of heroes and fallen to the ground. (16) It (further) resembled a mare spurred on precipitately by a horseman, skilled in warfare, and fallen down when killed by the opposite army. (17) Seated in his chariot, the glorious Bharata, son of Daśaratha, for his part, spoke as follows to the charioteer (Sumantra), who was driving the foremost of (the king's) chariots:—(18)

किं नु खल्वद्य गम्भीरो मूर्च्छितो न निशाम्यते । यथापुरमयोध्यायां गीतवादित्रनिःस्वनः ॥१९॥
वारुणीमदगन्धश्च माल्यगन्धश्च मूर्च्छितः । चन्दनागुरुगन्धश्च न प्रवाति समन्ततः ॥२०॥
यानप्रवरघोषश्च सुस्निग्धहयनिःस्वनः । प्रमत्तगजनादश्च महांश्च रथनिःस्वनः ॥२१॥
नेदानीं श्रूयते पुर्यामस्यां रामे विवासिते । चन्दनागुरुगन्धांश्च महार्हाश्च वनस्रजः ॥२२॥
गते रामे हि तरुणाः संतप्ता नोपभुञ्जते । बहिर्यात्रां न गच्छन्ति चित्रमाल्यधरा नराः ॥२३॥
नोत्सवाः सम्प्रवर्तन्ते रामशोकार्दिते पुरे । सा हि नूनं मम भ्रात्रा पुरस्यास्य द्युतिर्गता ॥२४॥

"How is it, I wonder, that the deep and resonant sound of vocal and instrumental music is not heard as before in Ayodhya today? (19) The intoxicating fragrance of spirituous liquor, the scent of flowers and the odour of sandalwood and aloewood, which (once) used to be spread on all sides, is not being wafted. (20) Śrī Rāma having been sent into exile, neither the noise of the foremost of chariots nor the most delightful neighing of horses, neither the trumpeting of highly excited elephants nor the great noise of chariots is heard in this city now. Sore distressed on Śrī Rāma having departed (from Ayodhya), indeed, young men (here) no longer use the paste of aloewood and sandalwood nor costly garlands of sylvan flowers (to cool their body with); nor do men go out for excursion wearing wreaths of various flowers. (21—23) Festivities no longer duly proceed in the capital, stricken (as it is) with grief caused by separation from Śrī Rāma; the former splendour of this city has, truly speaking, undoubtedly departed with my (elder) brother (Śrī Rāma). (24)

नहि राजत्ययोध्येयं सासारेवार्जुनी क्षपा । कदा नु खलु मे भ्राता महोत्सव इवागतः ॥२५॥
जनयिष्यत्ययोध्यायां हर्षं ग्रीष्म इवाम्बुदः । तरुणैश्चारुवेषैश्च नरैरुन्नतगामिभिः ॥२६॥
सम्पतद्भिरयोध्यायां नाभिभान्ति महापथाः । इति ब्रुवन् सारथिना दुःखितो भरतस्तदा ॥२७॥
अयोध्यां सम्प्रविश्यैव विवेश वसतिं पितुः । तेन हीनां नरेन्द्रेण सिंहहीनां गुहामिव ॥२८॥
तदा तदन्तःपुरमुज्झितप्रभं सुरैरिवोत्कृष्टमभास्करं दिनम् ।
निरीक्ष्य सर्वत्र विभक्तमात्मवान् मुमोच बाष्पं भरतः सुदुःखितः ॥२९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे चतुर्दशाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ ११४ ॥

This Ayodhya (with tears flowing from the eyes of its citizens) does not look charming any more than the night of a bright fortnight, with a (continuous) shower. Oh, when will my (elder) brother, returned (to Ayodhya) like a great festival, bring forth joy in Ayodhya like a rainy cloud in summer? The highways no longer shine forth with youngmen, clad in an attractive garb and walking with a proud gait, pouring into Ayodhya (from outside)." Immediately on penetrating into the heart of Ayodhya, Bharata, who was talking in the above strain with his charioteer (Sumantra), at that time, stricken (as he was) with agony, entered his father's palace, which looked (desolate) like a cave without a lion, bereft as it was of that ruler of men. (25—28) Sore distressed to gaze at that moment on the well-known gynaeceum,—which, having shed its splendour, resembled a day without the sun, bewailed by gods*, and was untidy everywhere, Bharata, who though self-possessed, shed tears. (29)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and fourteen in the Ayodhya-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

पञ्चदशाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CXV

Permitted by Vasiṣṭha and accompanied by Śatrughna and others, when the queens had entered the gynaeceum, Bharata proceeds to Nandigrāma and, installing the wooden sandals of Śrī Rāma on the royal seat, himself puts on the garb of an ascetic and carries on the rule under orders of the sandals, holding the royal umbrella over them.

ततो निक्षिप्य मातॄस्ता अयोध्यायां दृढव्रतः । भरतः शोकसंतप्तो गुरूनिदमथाब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥
नन्दिग्रामं गमिष्यामि सर्वानामन्त्रयेऽत्र वः । तत्र दुःखमिदं सर्वं सहिष्ये राघवं विना ॥ २ ॥

---

* The commentators refer here to a story in the Purāṇas, according to which, in the course of the great conflict between gods and demons the former lost ground and the sun-god was thrown down by Rāhu. This was followed by a chaos in the universe, when there was no division of days and nights. The gods approached Brahmā, who appointed Sage Atri to officiate for the sun-god for a week. One of these days of chaos is referred to here as a day without the sun, deplored by gods.

गतश्चाहो दिवं राजा वनस्थः स गुरुर्मम । रामं प्रतीक्षे राज्याय स हि राजा महायशाः ॥ ३ ॥
एतच्छ्रुत्वा शुभं वाक्यं भरतस्य महात्मनः । अब्रुवन् मन्त्रिणः सर्वे वसिष्ठश्च पुरोहितः ॥ ४ ॥
सुभृशं श्लाघनीयं च यदुक्तं भरत त्वया । वचनं भ्रातृवात्सल्यादनुरूपं तवैव तत् ॥ ५ ॥
नित्यं ते बन्धुलुब्धस्य तिष्ठतो भ्रातृसौहृदे । मार्गमार्यं प्रपन्नस्य नानुमन्येत कः पुमान् ॥ ६ ॥

Having brought his celebrated mothers (back) to Ayodhya, Bharata of steadfast vows, sore stricken with grief (as he was), then submitted to his preceptors (Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva and others) forthwith as follows:—(1) "I take leave of you all here: I shall (at once) proceed to Nandigrāma. Bereft of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) I shall endure all this suffering there. (2) Alas, the king has ascended to heaven and that elder brother of mine has taken up his abode in the forest. I look forward to Śrī Rāma to take care of the kingdom; for he is the highly illustrious ruler (of Ayodhya)." (3) Hearing this blessed utterance of the high-souled Bharata, all his counsellors as well as Vasiṣṭha, the (chief) family priest, replied (as follows):—(4) "The statement that has been made by you through loving devotion to your (elder) brother is extremely laudable; nay, it is worthy of you alone. (5) What man would not approve of the resolution of Your Royal Highness, who are ever covetous of the welfare of your kinsmen and are steadfast in your affection for your brothers, nay, who have taken to the noble path (the path of virtue)?" (6)

मन्त्रिणां वचनं श्रुत्वा यथाभिलषितं प्रियम् । अब्रवीत् सारथिं वाक्यं रथो मे युज्यतामिति ॥ ७ ॥
प्रहृष्टवदनः सर्वा मातॄः समभिभाष्य च । आरुरोह रथं श्रीमाञ्शत्रुघ्नेन समन्वितः ॥ ८ ॥
आरुह्य तु रथं क्षिप्रं शत्रुघ्नभरतावुभौ । ययतुः परमप्रीतौ वृतौ मन्त्रिपुरोहितैः ॥ ९ ॥
अग्रतो गुरवः सर्वे वसिष्ठप्रमुखा द्विजाः । प्रययुः प्राङ्मुखाः सर्वे नन्दिग्रामो यतो भवेत् ॥१०॥
बलं च तदनाहूतं गजाश्वरथसंकुलम् । प्रययौ भरते याते सर्वे च पुरवासिनः ॥११॥
रथस्थः स तु धर्मात्मा भरतो भ्रातृवत्सलः । नन्द्रिग्रामं ययौ तूर्णं शिरस्यादाय पादुके ॥१२॥

Hearing the agreeable reply of the counsellors, which was in consonance with his desire, Bharata spoke as follows to the charioteer (Sumantra):—"Let my chariot be got ready !" (7) Having spoken kindly with a most cheerful countenance, to all his mothers and accompanied by Śatrughna, the glorious prince got into the chariot. (8) Mounting the chariot, supremely delighted and surrounded by the counsellors and family priests, both Bharata and Śatrughna for their part quickly departed. (9) All the preceptors, headed by Vasiṣṭha, and (other) Brahmans being in the forefront, all proceeded with their face turned eastward on the path by which Nandigrāma could be reached. (10) When Bharata had left, the army too, full of elephants, horses and chariots, marched, though not called by Bharata, as well as all the citizens. (11) Seated in his chariot, the celebrated Bharata, for his part, whose mind was given to piety and who was (so) lovingly devoted to his (elder) brother, drove fast to Nandigrāma, taking the (pair of) wooden sandals on his head. (12)

भरतस्तु ततः क्षिप्रं नन्दिग्रामं प्रविश्य सः । अवतीर्य रथात् तूर्णं गुरूनिदमभाषत ॥१३॥
एतद् राज्यं मम भ्रात्रा दत्तं संन्यासमुत्तमम् । योगक्षेमवहे चेमे पादुके हेमभूषिते ॥१४॥
भरतः शिरसा कृत्वा संन्यासं पादुके ततः । अब्रवीद् दुःखसंतप्तः सर्वं प्रकृतिमण्डलम् ॥१५॥

छत्रं धारयत क्षिप्रमार्यपादाविमौ मतौ । आभ्यां राज्ये स्थितो धर्मः पादुकाभ्यां गुरोर्मम ॥१६॥
भ्रात्रा तु मयि संन्यासो निक्षिप्तः सौहृदादयम् । तमिमं पालयिष्यामि राघवागमनं प्रति ॥१७॥
क्षिप्रं संयोजयित्वा तु राघवस्य पुनः स्वयम् । चरणौ तौ तु रामस्य द्रक्ष्यामि सहपादुकौ ॥१८॥

Having speedily entered Nandigrāma and quickly alighting from his chariot, the said Bharata for his part then submitted to his preceptors as follows:—(13) "This kingdom has been given to me by my (elder) brother (Śrī Rāma) as a foremost sacred trust, as well as these wooden sandals decked with gold, which will supply all our needs and bring security (to us)." (14) Having dedicated the sacred trust to the (pair of) wooden sandals with his head bent low, Bharata, who was sore stricken with agony, then spoke (as follows) to the entire body of his ministers:—(15) "Hold the royal umbrella over these sandals; they are considered (by me) to be (as good as) the feet of my elder brother. By these wooden sandals of my elder brother will righteousness be established in the kingdom. (16) From affection alone has this sacred trust been committed to my charge by my (elder) brother. I shall keep this aforesaid trust till the return of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu). (17) Having undoubtedly restored these wooden sandals to Śrī Rama's feet immediately (on his return to the capital) myself, I for my part shall behold those feet placed on the (wooden) sandals." (18)

ततो निक्षिप्तभारोऽहं राघवेण समागतः । निवेद्य गुरवे राज्यं भजिष्ये गुरुवर्तिताम् ॥१९॥
राघवाय च संन्यासं दत्त्वेमे वरपादुके । राज्यं चेदमयोध्यां च धूतपापो भवाम्यहम् ॥२०॥
स वल्कलजटाधारी मुनिवेषधरः प्रभुः । नन्दिग्रामेऽवसद् धीरः ससैन्यो भरतस्तदा ॥२१॥
सवालव्यजनं छत्रं धारयामास स स्वयम् । भरतः शासनं सर्वं पादुकाभ्यां निवेदयन् ॥२२॥
ततस्तु भरतः श्रीमानभिषिच्यार्यपादुके । तदधीनस्तदा राज्यं कारयामास सर्वदा ॥२३॥
तदा हि यत् कार्यमुपैति किंचिदुपायनं चोपहृतं महार्हम् ।
स पादुकाभ्यां प्रथमं निवेद्य चकार पश्चाद् भरतो यथावत् ॥२४॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे पञ्चदशाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ ११५ ॥

Having restored the kingdom to my elder brother, when (re-) united with Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), and thereby laid down the burden (of responsibility), I shall then assume the role of a servant of my elder brother. (19) Nay, having given back to Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) this kingdom, held as a trust (till then), as well as (the city of) Ayodhya and the pair of excellent wooden sandals, I shall have shaken of the stigma (of having been instrumental in bringing about the exile of my elder brother)." (20) Wearing the bark of trees—(on his person) and matted locks (on his head) and (thus) assuming the garb of an ascetic, the said powerful and wise Bharata then lived at Nandigrāma with the army. (21) Committing the whole administration to the care of the wooden sandals, the celebrated Bharata himself held the royal umbrella along with the *Chowrie* (over them as a mark of respect). (22) Having then consecrated the wooden sandals of his elder brother (on the throne of Ayodhya), the glorious Bharata for his part now carried on the rule always subordinate to them. (23) Submitting in the first instance to the wooden sandals whatever affair (of the State) came up (before him), nay, whatever highly valuable present was offered (to the State), the said Bharata dealt with it in the proper way afterwards. (24)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and fifteen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

षोडशाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CXVI

Learning from outward signs that the ascetics who lived in the vicinity of Śrī Rāma were anxious to shift to some other forest, the latter asks them why they wished to leave the place. Being told in reply that they were being molested by Rākṣasas under the leadership of Khara, he gives his consent and, sending them away with great respect, retires to his own hermitage.

प्रतियाते तु भरते वसन् रामस्तदा वने । लक्षयामास सोद्वेगमथौत्सुक्यं तपस्विनाम् ॥ १ ॥
ये तत्र चित्रकूटस्य पुरस्तात् तापसाश्रमे । राममाश्रित्य निरतास्तानलक्षयदुत्सुकान् ॥ २ ॥
नयनैर्भ्रुकुटीभिश्च रामं निर्दिश्य शङ्किताः । अन्योन्यमुपजल्पन्तः शनैश्चक्रुर्मिथः कथाः ॥ ३ ॥
तेषामौत्सुक्यमालक्ष्य रामस्त्वात्मनि शङ्कितः । कृताञ्जलिरुवाचेदमृषिं कुलपतिं ततः ॥ ४ ॥
न कच्चिद् भगवन् किंचित् पूर्ववृत्तमिदं मयि । दृश्यते विकृतं येन विक्रियन्ते तपस्विनः ॥ ५ ॥
प्रमादाच्चरितं किंचित् कच्चिन्नावरजस्य मे । लक्ष्मणस्यर्षिभिर्दृष्टं नानुरूपं महात्मनः ॥ ६ ॥
कच्चिच्छुश्रूषमाणा वः शुश्रूषणपरा मयि । प्रमदाभ्युचितां वृत्तिं सीता युक्तां न वर्तते ॥ ७ ॥

Living in the forest when Bharata had returned (to Ayodhya), Śrī Rāma for his part forthwith noticed during that period anxiety accompanied by perturbation among the ascetics. (1) He perceived the ascetics—who looked formerly quite pleased in that hermitage at Chitrakoot, depending (as they did) on Śrī Rāma—anxious. (2) Making references to Śrī Rāma through (the movements of their eyes and eyebrows and calling one another, full of misgiving, they whispered among themselves. (3) Perceiving their anxiety, Śrī Rāma was filled with apprehension about himself and accordingly submitted with joined palms as follows to the Ṛṣi (a seer of Vedic Mantras) who presided over the hermitage:—(4) "I fear, O venerable sir, the conduct of my forefathers is not seen in me here or there is some change for the worse in me, due to which the ascetics feel agitated. (5) I hope no lapse, unbecoming of an exalted soul, on the part of my younger brother, Lakṣmaṇa, has been detected by the sages. (6) While attending on you, Sītā, who remains solely devoted to my service, does not, I am afraid, follow the conduct wholly worthy of a young lady and showing due respect (to you)." (7)

अथर्षिर्जरया वृद्धस्तपसा च जरां गतः । वेपमान इवोवाच रामं भूतदयापरम् ॥ ८ ॥
कुतः कल्याणसत्त्वायाः कल्याणाभिरतेः सदा । चलनं तात वैदेह्यास्तपस्विषु विशेषतः ॥ ९ ॥
त्वन्निमित्तमिदं तावत् तापसान् प्रति वर्तते । रक्षोभ्यस्तेन संविग्नाः कथयन्ति मिथः कथाः ॥१०॥
रावणावरजः कश्चित् खरो नामेह राक्षसः । उत्पाट्य तापसान् सर्वाञ्जनस्थाननिवासिनः ॥११॥
धृष्टश्च जितकाशी च नृशंसः पुरुषादकः । अवलिप्तश्च पापश्च त्वां च तात न मृष्यते ॥१२॥

The Ṛṣi, who was not only worn out from age but had also attained ripeness through askesis, replied (as follows), as though quaking, to Śrī Rāma, who regarded compassion for created beings as the highest virtue:—(8) "How can there be any aberration, my darling, on the part of Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom), who has a benign disposition and is ever devoted to goodness, particularly (in her attitude) towards ascetics? (9) This peril from the Rākṣasas threatens the ascetics because of you (who are kindly disposed to the latter). Alarmed by it, they hold conversation among themselves. (10) Having uprooted all the ascetics in Janasthāna (a portion of the Daṇḍaka forest), a man-eating Rākṣasa, Khara by name,—who is a younger brother of Rāvaṇa and is presumptuous, victorious in battle, brutal, haughty and sinful,—is intolerant of you too, my darling! (11-12)

त्वं यदाप्रभृति ह्यस्मिन्नाश्रमे तात वर्तसे । तदाप्रभृति रक्षांसि विप्रकुर्वन्ति तापसान् ॥१३॥
दर्शयन्ति हि बीभत्सैः क्रूरैर्भीषणकैरपि । नानारूपैर्विरूपैश्च रूपैरसुखदर्शनैः ॥१४॥
अप्रशस्तैरशुचिभिः सम्प्रयुज्य च तापसान् । प्रतिघ्नन्त्यपरान् क्षिप्रमनार्याः पुरतः स्थितान् ॥१५॥
अवक्षिपन्ति स्रुग्भाण्डानग्नीन् सिञ्चन्ति वारिणा । कलशांश्च प्रमर्दन्ति हवने समुपस्थिते ॥१६॥
तैर्दुरात्मभिराविष्टानाश्रमान् प्रजिहासवः । गमनायान्यदेशस्य चोदयन्त्यृषयोऽद्य माम् ॥१७॥
तत् पुरा राम शारीरीमुपहिंसां तपस्विषु । दर्शयन्ति हि दुष्टास्ते त्यक्ष्याम इममाश्रमम् ॥१८॥
बहुमूलफलं चित्रमविदूरादितो वनम् । अश्वस्याश्रममेवाहं श्रयिष्ये सगणः पुनः ॥१९॥
खरस्त्वय्यपि चायुक्तं पुरा राम प्रवर्तते । सहास्माभिरितो गच्छ यदि बुद्धिः प्रवर्तते ॥२०॥
सकलत्रस्य संदेहो नित्यं युक्तस्य राघव । समर्थस्यापि हि सतो वासो दुःखमिहाद्य ते ॥२१॥

"(Ever) since, O darling, you are in this hermitage, the ogres continue to ill-treat the ascetics. (13) They reveal themselves in diverse odious, savage, hideous and ugly forms, whose (very) sight brings sorrow (in its wake). (14) Nay, (forcibly) bringing the ascetics into touch with forbidden and impure substances, the ignoble fellows quickly dispose of others standing in front of them. (15) When the time of pouring oblations into the sacred fire has approached, they fling away sacrificial vessels such as the ladle, sprinkle the fires with water and smash the water-pots. (16) Desirous of leaving for good the hermitages defiled by those evil-minded fellows, the sages urge me to shift to another region to day. (17) Therefore, O Rāma, we shall certainly abandon this hermitage before those wicked fellows exhibit bodily violence towards the ascetics. (18) I shall then resort with my followers to the hermitage of Sage Aśwa (*lit.*, who does not lay by anything for the morrow), consisting of an excellent woodland abounding in roots and fruits, not very far from this place. (19) If your mind feels so inclined, O Rāma, depart from this place along with us before Khara proceeds unjustly with you as well, O Rāma! (20) Your continuance too at this place, O scion of Raghu, with your consort, although you are ever alert and even though you are powerful enough (to put him down) is attended with peril and conducive to misery now." (21)

इत्युक्तवन्तं रामस्तं राजपुत्रस्तपस्विनम् । न शशाकोत्तरैर्वाक्यैरवबद्धुं समुत्सुकम् ॥२२॥
अभिनन्द्य समापृच्छ्य समाधाय च राघवम् । स जगामाश्रमं त्यक्त्वा कुलैः कुलपतिः सह ॥२३॥
रामः संसाध्य ऋषिगणमनुगमनाद् देशात् तस्मात् कुलपतिमभिवाद्य ऋषिम् ।
सम्यक्प्रीतैस्तैरनुमत उपदिष्टार्थः पुण्यं वासाय स्वनिलयमुपसम्पेदे ॥२४॥
आश्रममृषिविरहितं प्रभुः क्षणमपि न जहौ स राघवः ।
राघवं हि सततमनुगतास्तापसाश्चार्षचरिते धृतगुणाः ॥२५॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे षोडशाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ ११६ ॥

Prince Rāma could not with counter-arguments check the said ascetic when he had spoken as above, impatient as he was (to leave the place). (22) Extolling, duly taking leave of and consoling Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the aforesaid leader of the sages departed with the hosts of sages, leaving the hermitage. (23) Seeing off the multitude of sages from that area by following them (to a distance), and greeting the Ṛṣi who presided over the (entire) host, nay, instructed (by the sage) about his duty, Śrī Rāma, when permitted by them, who were highly pleased (with him), returned to his sacred dwelling for rest. (24) The powerful Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), referred to above, did not leave the hermitage, (now) bereft of the sages, even for a moment; while the ascetics, who had fixed their mind on Śrī Rāma (who followed the conduct of sages) constantly followed Śrī Rāma (with their mind). (25)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and sixteen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

सप्तदशाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CXVII

Afraid of prolonging his stay at Chitrakoot because of many handicaps, Śrī Rāma leaves that mountain and, reaching the hermitage of Sage Atri, greets the aforesaid Ṛṣi. Glorifying the ascetic life of his wife, Anasūyā, the sage urges Rāma to send his consort, Sītā, to her. Kindly receiving the princess, who greeted the venerable old lady on reaching her as instructed by her husband, Anasūyā gives her instructions on the duties of a devoted wife,

राघवस्त्वपयातेषु सर्वेष्वनुविचिन्तयन् । न तत्रारोचयद् वासं कारणैर्बहुभिस्तदा ॥ १ ॥
इह मे भरतो दृष्टो मातरश्च सनागराः । सा च मे स्मृतिरन्वेति तान् नित्यमनुशोचतः ॥ २ ॥
स्कन्धावारनिवेशेन तेन तस्य महात्मनः । हयहस्तिकरीषैश्च उपमर्दः कृतो भृशम् ॥ ३ ॥

तस्मादन्यत्र गच्छाम इति संचिन्त्य राघवः । प्रातिष्ठत स वैदेह्या लक्ष्मणेन च संगतः ॥ ४ ॥
सोऽत्रेराश्रममासाद्य तं ववन्दे महायशाः । तं चापि भगवानत्रिः पुत्रवत् प्रत्यपद्यत ॥ ५ ॥
स्वयमातिथ्यमादिश्य सर्वमस्य सुसत्कृतम् । सौमित्रिं च महाभागं सीतां च समसान्त्वयत् ॥ ६ ॥

Reflecting again and again, when all (the ascetics) had left, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) for his part did not like to continue his stay there any more for many reasons. (1) "At this place was Bharata seen by me as well as my mothers with the people of Ayodhya. Nay, that memory (still) haunts me, who mourn for them daily. (2) Moreover much impurity has been caused (to the land) by the dry dung of horses and elephants due to the camping, referred to above, of the army of that high-souled prince (Bharata). (3) We shall, therefore, move elsewhere !" Pondering thus, the celebrated Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) accompanied by Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) and Lakṣmaṇa, departed (from Chitrakoot). (4) Having reached the hermitage of Sage Atri, that highly illustrious prince saluted him; and the glorious Atri too received him as his own son. (5) Having personally shown every hospitality with full honours to him, he comforted the highly blessed Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā too. (6)

पत्नीं च तमनुप्राप्तां वृद्धामामन्त्र्य सत्कृताम् । सान्त्वयायास धर्मज्ञः सर्वभूतहिते रतः ॥ ७ ॥
अनसूयां महाभागां तापसीं धर्मचारिणीम् । प्रतिगृह्णीष्व वैदेहीमब्रवीदृषिसत्तमः ॥ ८ ॥
रामाय चाचचक्षे तां तापसीं धर्मचारिणीम् । दश वर्षाण्यनावृष्ट्या दग्धे लोके निरन्तरम् ॥ ९ ॥
यया मूलफले सृष्टे जाह्नवी च प्रवर्तिता । उग्रेण तपसा युक्ता नियमैश्चाप्यलंकृता ॥१०॥
दश वर्षसहस्राणि यया तप्तं महत् तपः । अनसूया व्रतैस्तात प्रत्यूहाश्च निबर्हिताः ॥११॥
देवकार्यनिमित्तं च यया संत्वरमाणया । दशरात्रं कृता रात्रिः सेयं मातेव तेऽनघ ॥१२॥
तामिमां सर्वभूतानां नमस्कार्यां तपस्विनीम् । अभिगच्छतु वैदेही वृद्धामक्रोधनां सदा ॥१३॥

Calling by name his aged and highly blessed wife, Anasūyā, who had reached his presence and was received with attentions (by him), and who was given to austerities and the practice of virtue, Atri (the foremost of sages), who knew what is right and was devoted to the good of all created beings, spoke kindly to her, (and said), "Welcome Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom)." (7-8) He further introduced to Śrī Rāma (as follows) the aforesaid lady, who was given to austerities and the practice of virtue:—"Like a mother to you, O sinless prince, is this celebrated Anasūyā, distinguished by severe asceticism and adorned with sacred vows, by whom roots and fruits were produced and the river Ganga (a foster-daughter of the royal king Jahnu) was made to flow (close to my hermitage by virtue of her asceticism) at a time when the world had been dried up by a drought continuing for ten years without break, (nay) by whom great askesis was practised for ten thousand years and obstacles (in the way of Ṛṣis) were done away with and by whom for the purpose* of gods in a great hurry ten nights were reduced to one night. (9—12) Let Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom) meekly approach this celebrated and aged hermitess, who is worth saluting in the eyes of all created beings, and is ever free from anger." (13)

---

* We read in the Purāṇas how Sage Māṇḍavya once pronounced a curse against a hermitess, Śāṇḍili by name, who was a friend of Anasūyā, that she would be widowed one morning within the next ten days. The hermitess in her turn pronounced a counter-curse saying that there would be no dawn any more. Alarmed at this gods approached Anasūyā, who by virtue of her asceticism converted the period of ten nights into one and in this way averted the death of the hermitess' husband and accomplished the purpose of gods.

एवं ब्रुवाणं तमृषिं तथेत्युक्त्वा स राघवः । सीतामालोक्य धर्मज्ञामिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ॥१४॥
राजपुत्रि श्रुतं त्वेतन्मुनेरस्य समीरितम् । श्रेयोऽर्थमात्मनः शीघ्रमभिगच्छ तपस्विनीम् ॥१५॥
अनसूयेति या लोके कर्मभिः ख्यातिमागता । तां शीघ्रमभिगच्छ त्वमभिगम्यां तपस्विनीम् ॥१६॥
सीता त्वेतद् वचः श्रुत्वा राघवस्य यशस्विनी । तामत्रिपत्नीं धर्मज्ञामभिचक्राम मैथिली ॥१७॥
शिथिलां वलितां वृद्धां जरापाण्डुरमूर्धजाम् । सततं वेपमानाङ्गीं प्रवाते कदलीमिव ॥१८॥
तां तु सीता महाभागामनसूयां पतिव्रताम् । अभ्यवादयदव्यग्रा स्वं नाम समुदाहरत् ॥१९॥
अभिवाद्य च वैदेही तापसीं तां दमान्विताम् । बद्धाञ्जलिपुटा हृष्टा पर्यपृच्छदनामयम् ॥२०॥

Saying "Amen !" to the aforesaid Ṛṣi, who was speaking in this strain, and looking at Sītā, who knew what is right, the celebrated Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) addressed the following words to her:—(14) "The foregoing utterance of this sage has surely been heard by you, O princess ! For your own good (therefore) quickly approach the hermitess with reverence. (15) Speedily seek you respectfully the ascetic lady, who is worth approaching with reverence and who has attained celebrity in the world through her actions under the name of Anasūyā (*lit.*, free from jealousy)." (16) Hearing this exhortation of Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the illustrious Sītā, a princess of Mithila, for her part proceeded to meet the celebrated and aged consort of Atri, who knew what is right, (nay) who was feeble (of body) and wrinkled, with her hair turned grey due to old age, and whose frame constantly shook like a banana tree in a storm. (17-18) Sītā for her part calmly greeted the highly blessed Anasūyā, devoted to her husband, and duly uttered her own name (by way of introduction). (19) Nay, having greeted that hermitess, who was endowed with self-restraint, Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom), full of joy, inquired after her health with joined palms. (20)

ततः सीतां महाभागां दृष्ट्वा तां धर्मचारिणीम् । सान्त्वयन्त्यब्रवीद् वृद्धा दिष्ट्या धर्ममवेक्षसे ॥२१॥
त्यक्त्वा ज्ञातिजनं सीते मानवृद्धिं च मानिनि । अवरुद्धं वने रामं दिष्ट्या त्वमनुगच्छसि ॥२२॥
नगरस्थो वनस्थो वा शुभो वा यदि वाशुभः । यासां स्त्रीणां प्रियो भर्ता तासां लोका महोदयाः ॥२३॥
दुःशीलः कामवृत्तो वा धनैर्वा परिवर्जितः । स्त्रीणामार्यस्वभावानां परमं दैवतं पतिः ॥२४॥
नातो विशिष्टं पश्यामि बान्धवं विमृशन्त्यहम् । सर्वत्र योग्यं वैदेहि तपःकृतमिवाव्ययम् ॥२५॥
न त्वेवमनुगच्छन्ति गुणदोषमसत्स्त्रियः । कामवक्तव्यहृदया भर्तृनाथाश्चरन्ति याः ॥२६॥
प्राप्नुवन्त्ययशश्चैव धर्मभ्रंशं च मैथिलि । अकार्यवशमापन्नाः स्त्रियो याः खलु तद्विधाः ॥२७॥
त्वद्विधास्तु गुणैर्युक्ता दृष्टलोकपरावराः । स्त्रियः स्वर्गे चरिष्यन्ति तथा पुण्यकृतस्तथा ॥२८॥
तदेवमेतं त्वमनुव्रता सती पतिप्रधाना समयानुवर्तिनी ।
भव स्वभर्तुः सहधर्मचारिणी यशश्च धर्मं च ततः समाप्स्यसि ॥२९॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे सप्तदशाधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ ११७ ॥

Seeing the highly blessed and celebrated Sītā, who was given to the practice of virtue, the old lady thereupon comfortingly said (to her), "Luckily (enough) you have your eyes fixed on righteousness. (21) Having forsaken your relations and given up your exaltation, O proud Sītā, I am glad, you are following (your husband,) Srī Rāma, who has been exiled into the forest. (22) Worlds that are attended with great prosperity await those women to whom their husband is dear, no matter whether he lives in a city or in a forest, whether he is propitious or adverse. (23) In the eyes of women who are blessed with a noble disposition the husband is the highest deity, no matter whether he is ill-mannered or licentious or entirely devoid of riches. (24) Though deeply pondering, I do not see for a woman a friend greater than the husband and more capable of yielding one's desired object at all places like the imperishable fruit of one's austerities, O princess of the Videha kingdom! (25) Those evil women, however, whose hearts are swayed by desire, (nay) who lord it over their husband, having no sense of virtue and vice, and move about (at will) do not follow him in the aforesaid manner. (26) Indeed, fallen a prey to concupiscence (which is worth giving up), women who belong to that category, O princess of Mithila, meet with a fall from virtue and also reap infamy. (27) Women like you, on the other hand, who are adorned with virtues (like devotion to their husband) and have discovered what is good and evil in the world, will (hereafter) dwell in heaven in the same way as those who have performed meritorious deeds. (28) Therefore, remaining devoted to the service of this prince, (nay), looking upon your husband as the foremost (object of your worship) and attending on him at the proper time, practise virtue in co-operation with your husband. Thereby you will easily attain fame as well as religious merit." (29)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and seventeen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

अष्टादशाधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CXVIII

At the end of her dialogue with Sītā Anasūyā requests her to ask a boon of the hermitess and, highly pleased with her, the hermitess bestows heavenly flowers and ornaments on her. Urged by Anasūyā, she relates to the hermitess the story of her marriage.

सा त्वेवमुक्ता वैदेही त्वनसूयानसूयया । प्रतिपूज्य वचो मन्दं प्रवक्तुमुपचक्रमे ॥ १ ॥
नैतदाश्चर्यमार्यायां यन्मां त्वमनुभाषसे । विदितं तु ममाप्येतद् यथा नार्याः पतिर्गुरुः ॥ २ ॥
यद्यप्येष भवेद् भर्ता अनार्यो वृत्तिवर्जितः । अद्वैधमत्र वर्तव्यं तथाप्येष मया भवेत् ॥ ३ ॥
किं पुनर्यो गुणश्लाघ्यः सानुक्रोशो जितेन्द्रियः । स्थिरानुरागो धर्मात्मा मातृवत्पितृवत्प्रियः ॥ ४ ॥
यां वृत्तिं वर्तते रामः कौसल्यायां महाबलः । तामेव नृपनारीणामन्यासामपि वर्तते ॥ ५ ॥
सकृद् दृष्टास्वपि स्त्रीषु नृपेण नृपवत्सलः । मातृवद् वर्तते वीरो मानमुत्सृज्य धर्मवित् ॥ ६ ॥

Applauding her speech when instructed in the foregoing words by Anasūyā, Sītā (a princess of the Videha kingdom), for her part, who was free from the carping spirit, actually began slowly to reply (as follows):—(1) "This instruction which you have given to me is no matter for wonder on Your Holiness' part. It is, however, (already) known to me as well how the husband is the adored of a matron. (2) Even if this husband of mine were ignoble and without any means of livelihood, I ought to have nonetheless conducted myself (just) in the same way without any hesitation or scruple towards him: this was my duty. (3) How much more worthy of devotion (then) is he who is deserving of praise by virtue of his excellences and full of compassion, (nay) who has controlled (all) his senses (including the mind, the inner sense), who is constant in his love, whose mind is set on righteousness and who is loving (both) as a mother and father (combined)! (4) Śrī Rāma, who is possessed of great might, conducted himself towards the other consorts of the king (his stepmothers) in the same way as he did towards Kausalyā (his own mother). (5) Giving up (all) self-esteem, the gallant prince, who was lovingly devoted to the king (his father) and knows what is right, conducted himself as he would towards his (own) mother (even) towards the women who had been looked on (with love) by the king but once. (6)

आगच्छन्त्याश्च विजनं वनमेवं भयावहम् । समाहितं हि मे श्वश्र्वा हृदये यत् स्थिरं मम ॥ ७ ॥
पाणिप्रदानकाले च यत् पुरा त्वग्निसंनिधौ । अनुशिष्टं जनन्या मे वाक्यं तदपि मे धृतम् ॥ ८ ॥
नवीकृतं तु मे सर्वं वाक्यैः स्वैर्धर्मचारिणि । पतिशुश्रूषणान्नार्यास्तपो नान्यद् विधीयते ॥ ९ ॥
सावित्री पतिशुश्रूषां कृत्वा स्वर्गे महीयते । तथावृत्तिश्च याता त्वं पतिशुश्रूषया दिवम् ॥१०॥
वरिष्ठा सर्वनारीणामेषा च दिवि देवता । रोहिणी न विना चन्द्रं मुहूर्तमपि दृश्यते ॥११॥
एवंविधाश्च प्रवराः स्त्रियो भर्तृदृढव्रताः । देवलोके महीयन्ते पुण्येन स्वेन कर्मणा ॥१२॥

"Whatever was taught to me by my mother-in law while I was coming to the lonely forest, which is so frightful as well, stands inscribed on my heart. (7) Nay, that lesson too which was actually imparted to me in the past by my mother while making over my hand (to the bridegroom at the time of marriage) in the presence of the sacred fire is (still) remembered by me. (8) All that (teaching) has actually been renewed (in my mind) by your teachings, O lady given to the practice of virtue! No askesis other than the service of one's husband is enjoined on a matron. (9) Having rendered service to her husband (all her life), Sāvitrī (the celebrated wife of Prince Satyavān) is (now) greatly respected in heaven; nay, conducting yourself in the same way, you (too) have virtually ascended to heaven through service to your husband. (10) (By virtue of her devotion to her spouse) this Rohiṇī (the most favourite consort of the moon-god, presiding over a constellation of the same name), the most excellent of all women and (now) dwelling in heaven as a deity, is not seen (in the heavens) without the moon even for a while. (11) Nay, steadfast in their vow of fidelity to their husband, (more) such exalted women are highly respected in the realm of gods by virtue of their meritorious action." (12)

ततोऽनसूया संहृष्टा श्रुत्वोक्तं सीतया वचः । शिरसाऽऽघ्राय चोवाच मैथिलीं हर्षयन्त्युत ॥१३॥
नियमैर्विविधैराप्तं तपो हि महदस्ति मे । तत् संश्रित्य बलं सीते छन्दये त्वां शुचिव्रते ॥१४॥

उपपन्नं च युक्तं च वचनं तव मैथिलि । प्रीता चास्म्युच्यतां सीते करवाणि प्रियं च किम् ॥१५॥
तस्यास्तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा विस्मिता मन्दविस्मया । कृतमित्यब्रवीत् सीता तपोबलसमन्विताम् ॥१६॥
सा त्वेवमुक्ता धर्मज्ञा तया प्रीततराभवत् । सफलं च प्रहर्षं ते हन्त सीते करोम्यहम् ॥१७॥
इदं दिव्यं वरं माल्यं वस्त्रमाभरणानि च । अङ्गरागं च वैदेहि महार्हमनुलेपनम् ॥१८॥
मया दत्तमिदं सीते तव गात्राणि शोभयेत् । अनुरूपमसंक्लिष्टं नित्यमेव भविष्यति ॥१९॥
अङ्गरागेण दिव्येन लिप्ताङ्गी जनकात्मजे । शोभयिष्यसि भर्तारं यथा श्रीर्विष्णुमव्ययम् ॥२०॥

Highly rejoiced to hear the reply made by Sītā, and smelling her head (as a token of affection) Anasūyā thereupon said, cheering the princess of Mithilā at the same time:—(13) "Indeed there exists to my credit ample spiritual energy earned through religious observances of various kinds; banking on that energy, O Sītā of holy vows, I request you to ask a boon of me. (14) What you have said, O princess of Mithilā, is reasonable and just; and I am pleased (to hear it). Tell me, O Sītā, what kindly act can I do (for you)?" (15) Astonished to hear the aforesaid utterance of Anasūyā, Sītā, gently smiling, replied to the lady, who was richly endowed with spiritual energy earned through askesis,—"Everything stands (already) accomplished (by Your Holiness' grace alone)." (16) Spoken to in these words by Sītā, Anasūyā for her part who knew what is right felt all the more gratified and said, "Ha ha! I make your extreme gratification (born of contentment) fruitful (by offering loving gifts to you). (17) Here are an excellent celestial garland, garment and ornaments, cosmetic and a precious unguent, O princess of the Videha kingdom! (18) Let this gift, bestowed by me, O Sītā, beautify your limbs. It will prove worthy of you and will remain intact for all time to come (even after constant use). (19) Your limbs smeared with the celestial cosmetic, O daughter of Janaka, you will adorn your husband as Lakṣmī (the goddess of fortune and beauty) does the imperishable Lord Viṣṇu." (20)

सा वस्त्रमङ्गरागं च भूषणानि स्रजस्तथा । मैथिली प्रतिजग्राह प्रीतिदानमनुत्तमम् ॥२१॥
प्रतिगृह्य च तत् सीता प्रीतिदानं यशस्विनी । श्लिष्टाञ्जलिपुटा धीरा समुपास्त तपोधनाम् ॥२२॥
तथा सीतामुपासीनामनसूया दृढव्रता । वचनं प्रष्टुमारेभे कथां कांचिदनु प्रियाम् ॥२३॥
स्वयंवरे किल प्राप्ता त्वमनेन यशस्विना । राघवेणेति मे सीते कथा श्रुतिमुपागता ॥२४॥
तां कथां श्रोतुमिच्छामि विस्तरेण च मैथिलि । यथाभूतं च कार्त्स्न्येन तन्मे त्वं वक्तुमर्हसि ॥२५॥
एवमुक्ता तु सा सीता तापसीं धर्मचारिणीम् । श्रूयतामिति चोक्त्वा वै कथयामास तां कथाम् ॥२६॥

The aforesaid princess of Mithila accepted the garment as well as the cosmetic, jewels and wreaths of flowers as an unsurpassed gift of love. (21) Accepting that gift of love, the illustrious and wise Sītā remained sitting with joined palms by the side of that lady, whose (sole) wealth was her asceticism. (22) Anasūyā of steadfast vows next proceeded to speak (as follows) to Sītā, sitting beside her as aforesaid, in order to draw out from (her) a pleasing narrative:—(23) "The story has actually reached my ears, O Sītā, that you were secured by this illustrious prince, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu) in a choice-marriage. (24) I long to hear that story *in extenso* too, O princess of Mithila! You should therefore tell me in full how it happened." (25) Saying, "Be pleased to listen!" when requested in the foregoing words, the aforesaid Sītā, for her part, actually began (as follows) to narrate that story to the hermitess, who was given to the practice of virtue:—(26)

मिथिलाधिपतिर्वीरो जनको नाम धर्मवित् । क्षत्रकर्मण्यभिरतो न्यायतः शास्ति मेदिनीम् ॥२७॥
तस्य लाङ्गलहस्तस्य कृषतः क्षेत्रमण्डलम् । अहं किलोत्थिता भित्त्वा जगतीं नृपतेः सुता ॥२८॥
स मां दृष्ट्वा नरपतिर्मुष्टिविक्षेपतत्परः । पांसुगुण्ठितसर्वाङ्गीं विस्मितो जनकोऽभवत् ॥२९॥
अनपत्येन च स्नेहादङ्कमारोप्य च स्वयम् । ममेयं तनयेत्युक्त्वा स्नेहो मयि निपातितः ॥३०॥
अन्तरिक्षे च वागुक्ता प्रति मामानुषी किल । एवमेतन्नरपते धर्मेण तनया तव ॥३१॥
ततः प्रहृष्टो धर्मात्मा पिता मे मिथिलाधिपः । अवाप्तो विपुलामृद्धिं मामवाप्य नराधिपः ॥३२॥
दत्ता चास्मीष्टवद्देव्यै ज्येष्ठायै पुण्यकर्मणे । तया सम्भाविता चास्मि स्निग्धया मातृसौहृदात् ॥३३॥

"The gallant king of Mithila, Janaka by name, who knows what is right and is devoted to the duties of a Kṣatriya, rules over the earth with equity. (27) While he was furrowing a plot of land (fit to serve as a sacrificial ground), plough in hand, I emerged, they say, breaking through the earth and came to be the king's daughter (since that time). (28) The said King Janaka, who was (diligently) engaged in scattering handfuls of seeds (of annual plants), was astonished to behold me, all my limbs covered with dust. (29) Nay, spontaneously lifting me up in his arms out of affection and saying 'This shall be my daughter !', since he had no issue (then), love was bestowed lavishly by him on me. (30) A superhuman voice, they say, was also uttered (and heard) in the air about me:—'Let it be so, O protector of men ! She will be your daughter from the moral point of view.' (31) My father, the ruler of Mithila, whose mind is given to piety, felt highly rejoiced at that. (Nay) the king attained a vast fortune on securing me (as his foster-daughter). (32) I was further given over, like a coveted issue, to the seniormost queen, who was given to meritorious deeds; and I was brought up by that tender lady through motherly affection. (33)

पतिसंयोगसुलभं वयो दृष्ट्वा तु मे पिता । चिन्तामभ्यगमद् दीनो वित्तनाशादिवाधनः ॥३४॥
सदृशाच्चापकृष्टाच्च लोके कन्यापिता जनात् । प्रधर्षणमवाप्नोति शक्रेणापि समो भुवि ॥३५॥
तां धर्षणामदूरस्थां संदृश्यात्मनि पार्थिवः । चिन्तार्णवगतः पारं नाससादाप्लवो यथा ॥३६॥

"Perceiving my age to be such when union with a husband can be easily had, my father for his part fell a prey to anxiety, feeling distressed as a destitute would through loss of fortune. (34) The father of an unmarried girl, even though he is a compeer of Indra (the lord of paradise) on earth, suffers indignity in the world at the hands of a suitor's men, no matter if they are equal or (even) inferior (in status) to him. (35) Perceiving that indignity threatening him at no distant date, the king was plunged in a sea of anxiety and did not reach its end any more than a man without a bark would reach the end of a sea. (36)

अयोनिजां हि मां ज्ञात्वा नाध्यगच्छत् स चिन्तयन् । सदृशं चाभिरूपं च महीपालः पतिं मम ॥३७॥
तस्य बुद्धिरियं जाता चिन्तयानस्य संततम् । स्वयंवरं तनूजायाः करिष्यामीति धर्मतः ॥३८॥
महायज्ञे तदा तस्य वरुणेन महात्मना । दत्तं धनुर्वरं प्रीत्या तूणी चाक्षय्यसायकौ ॥३९॥
असंचाल्यं मनुष्यैश्च यत्नेनापि च गौरवात् । तन्न शक्ता नमयितुं स्वप्नेष्वपि नराधिपाः ॥४०॥
तद्धनुः प्राप्य मे पित्रा व्याहृतं सत्यवादिना । समवाये नरेन्द्राणां पूर्वमामन्त्र्य पार्थिवान् ॥४१॥
इदं च धनुरुद्यम्य सज्यं यः कुरुते नरः । तस्य मे दुहिता भार्या भविष्यति न संशयः ॥४२॥

e (as he did) one not emerged from the aforesaid king though reflecting, find and worthy match for was constantly reflecting his mind:—According code (prescribed for the shall (so) arrange that my ects a match (for herself). frce) will (at an assembly 38) At a great sacrifice Dakṣa, a lord of created beginning of creation) an capable of subduing the ell as a pair of quivers inexhaustible stock of stowed with love by the aruṇa (as an agent of ed by Lord Śiva, whom the gods had approached for such a bow) upon the celebrated Devarāta (a forbear of King Janaka) at a time when the gods were oppressed by Lord Śiva (infuriated by the self-immolation of His divine Consort, Satī). (39) Nay, monarchs were not able even in their dreams to bend it, as it could not even be moved with effort by men because of its (heavy) weight. (40) Having in the first instance invited rulers of the earth and (then) with reverence sought the aforesaid bow, it was announced by my father, who (always) spoke the truth, in an assembly of monarchs, that 'my daughter shall come to be the wife of that man who, having lifted up this bow, forthwith strings it: there is no doubt about it.' (41-42)

धनुःश्रेष्ठं गौरवाद् गिरिसंनिभम् । अभिवाद्य नृपा जग्मुरशक्तास्तस्य तोळने ॥४३॥
कालस्य राघवोऽयं महाद्युतिः । विश्वामित्रेण सहितो यज्ञं द्रष्टुं समागतः ॥४४॥
ह भ्रात्रा रामः सत्यपराक्रमः । विश्वामित्रस्तु धर्मात्मा मम पित्रा सुपूजितः ॥४५॥
प्रोवाच पितरं तत्र राघवौ रामळक्ष्मणौ ।
रक्ष्येमौ धनुर्दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणौ । धनुर्दर्शय रामाय राजपुत्राय दैविकम् ॥४६॥
विप्रेण तद् धनुः समुपानयत् । तद् धनुर्दर्शयामास राजपुत्राय दैविकम् ॥४७॥
षेण तदानम्य महाबळः । ज्यां समारोप्य झटिति पूरयामास वीर्यवान् ॥४८॥

ing that jewel among bows, a great extent compared with in point of its weight, and the rulers of men withdrew, they were) even to support ir lands). (43) After a long time, however, Śrī present here and who of great splendour, duly at the scene), accompanied ge Viśwāmitra, to behold the (44) Śrī Rāma, who is of an unfailing prowess, with his (younger) brother, ṇa, as well as Sage Viśwāmitra, mind is set on piety, was edly treated with great respect by my father. (45) Viśwāmitra on that occasion said to my father, 'Here are the two sons of Daśaratha, Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (by name), scions of Raghu, (who are) keen to behold the bow. Therefore, (please) show the celestial bow to Prince Rāma.' (46) Urged in these words by that Brahman (Viśwāmitra), my father caused that bow to be duly brought to their presence and showed that celestial bow to the prince. (47) Bending it a little in a mere instant and fixing the string (to it), the very mighty prince, who was full of valour, quickly drew it at full length. (48)

पूरयता वेगान्मध्ये भग्नं द्विधा धनुः । तस्य शब्दोऽभवद् भीमः पतितस्याशनेर्यथा ॥४९॥
तोऽहं तत्र रामाय पित्रा सत्याभिसंधिना । उद्यता दातुमुद्यम्य जळभाजनमुत्तमम् ॥५०॥

दीयमानां न तु तदा प्रतिजग्राह राघवः । अविज्ञाय पितुश्छन्दमयोध्या
ततः श्वशुरमामन्त्र्य वृद्धं दशरथं नृपम् । मम पित्रा त्वहं दत्ता रामाय
मम चैवानुजा साध्वी ऊर्मिला शुभदर्शना । भार्यार्थे लक्ष्मणस्यापि दत्ता पित्र
एवं दत्तास्मि रामाय तथा तस्मिन् स्वयंवरे । अनुरक्तास्मि धर्मेण पतिं

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डेऽष्टादशाधिकशततम

"The bow was broken in two at the middle by Śrī Rāma while he was pulling it with force. A terrific sound like that of a thunderbolt falling on earth rose from it. (49) I was then kept by my father,—who is true to his promise and had (by his side) an excellent vessel of water (in order to wash the feet and hands of the bridegroom as a token of respect before giving me away to him in marriage)—in readiness for being given away on that (very) spot to Śrī Rāma. (50) Not knowing full well the mind of his father, the paramount ruler of Ayodhya and his master, Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), however, did not accept me (as a

bride) while I was
marriage). (51)
(to his capital) m
aged King Daśarat
was then given awa
Śrī Rāma, who ha
(52) My younger
Ūrmilā of blessed ap
given away by my
accord to Lakṣmaṇa
to wife. (53) Thus
(in marriage) to Śrī
on the aforesaid occa
a bridegroom by m
then) I remain devot
my husband, the
who are possessed

Thus ends Canto One hundred and eighteen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the gl
of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

एकोनविंशत्यधिकशततमः सर्गः

Canto CXIX

Glorifying the evening shades, that had now fallen, Anasūyā
Sītā, decked with the ornaments bestowed on her by hers
presence of Śrī Rāma. To the latter, who was agreeably su
to behold Sītā resplendent with heavenly jewels, she re
how she received the jewels as a loving gift from t
hermitess. Accepting the hospitality of the hermits
and staying with them for the night, Śrī Rāma
asks leave of them in the morning to
proceed further and, following the
route shown by the hermits, the
princely party enters the
Daṇḍaka forest.

अनसूया तु धर्मज्ञा श्रुत्वा तां महतीं कथाम् । पर्यष्वजत बाहुभ्यां शिरस्याघ्राय
व्यक्ताक्षरपदं चित्रं भाषितं मधुरं त्वया । यथा स्वयंवरं वृत्तं तत् सर्वं च

रमेयं कथया ते तु दृढं मधुरभाषिणि । रविरस्तं गतः श्रीमानुपोह्य रजनीं शुभाम् ॥ ३ ॥
दिवसं परिकीर्णानामाहारार्थं पतत्त्रिणाम् । संध्याकाले निलीनानां निद्रार्थं श्रूयते ध्वनिः ॥ ४ ॥
एते चाप्यभिषेकार्द्रा मुनयः कलशोद्यताः । सहिता उपवर्तन्ते सलिलाप्लुतवल्कलाः ॥ ५ ॥
अग्निहोत्रे च ऋषिणा हुते च विधिपूर्वकम् । कपोताङ्गारुणो धूमो दृश्यते पवनोद्धतः ॥ ६ ॥

Hearing that great narrative and smelling the head of the princess of Mithila (as a token of affection). Anasūyā for her part, who knew what is right, folded her in her arms (and said:—) (1) "What you have said in distinct tones and words is surprising and sweet. The way in which your choice-marriage took place has also been fully heard by me. (2) I would have been delighted much to hear (more of) your story, O sweet-speaking lady ! Ushering in the charming night, the glorious sun has, however, sunk below horizon. (3) The noise is being heard of birds scattered about during the daytime in search of food and roosted (in their nests) at eventide for sleep. (4) These hermits too, wet after a bath and their coverings of bark (too) soaked with water, are returning in a body with uplifted vessels (full of water). (5) The rite of offering oblations into the sacred fire having been performed by the sage (Atri) according to the scriptural ordinance, a column of smoke, dark-blue like a pigeon's neck, raised by the wind, is seen (over there). (6)

अल्पवर्णा हि तरवो घनीभूताः समन्ततः । विप्रकृष्टेन्द्रिये देशे न प्रकाशन्ति वै दिशः ॥ ७ ॥
रजनीचरसत्त्वानि प्रचरन्ति समन्ततः । तपोवनमृगा ह्येते वेदितीर्थेषु शेरते ॥ ८ ॥
सम्प्रवृत्ता निशा सीते नक्षत्रसमलंकृता । ज्योत्स्नाप्रावरणश्चन्द्रो दृश्यतेऽभ्युदितोऽम्बरे ॥ ९ ॥
गम्यतामनुजानामि रामस्यानुचरी भव । कथयन्त्या हि मधुरं त्वयाहमपि तोषिता ॥१०॥
अलंकुरु च तावत् त्वं प्रत्यक्षं मम मैथिलि । प्रीतिं जनय मे वत्से दिव्यालंकारशोभिनी ॥११॥
सा तदा समलंकृत्य सीता सुरसुतोपमा । प्रणम्य शिरसा पादौ रामं त्वभिमुखी ययौ ॥१२॥

"In the landscape remote from our eyes trees, though clothed with sparse leaves, indeed look dense all round (with foliage), so that the quarters do not shine vividly. (7) Ogres (who range at night) are freely moving all round, while these deer of groves reserved for practising austerities are lying down on the sacred altars. (8) The night richly adorned with stars has fairly set in, O Sītā; the moon enveloped in moonlight is seen clearly risen in the sky. (9) You may go (now), I permit you to depart. Wait (you) as a maid-servant on Śrī Rāma. I too have undoubtedly been pleased by you, speaking as you did sweet words (to me). (10) Adorn yourself in the meantime (with the garment and ornaments gifted by me) before my eyes, O princess of Mithila ! Heightening the charm of the heavenly jewels (with your personal charm), cause delight to me, my darling !" (11) Having duly adorned herself and saluting with reverence the feet of Anasūyā with her head bent low, Sītā for her part, who looked like a daughter of gods, went forward to meet Śrī Rāma on that occasion. (12)

तथा तु भूषितां सीतां ददर्श वदतां वरः । राघवः प्रीतिदानेन तपस्विन्या जहर्ष च ॥१३॥
न्यवेदयत् ततः सर्वं सीता रामाय मैथिली । प्रीतिदानं तपस्विन्या वसनाभरणस्रजाम् ॥१४॥

प्रहृष्टस्त्वभवद् रामो लक्ष्मणश्च महारथः । मैथिल्याः सत्क्रियां दृष्ट्वा मानुषेषु सुदुर्लभाम् ॥१५॥
ततः स शर्वरीं प्रीतः पुण्यां शशिनिभाननाम् । अर्चितस्तापसैः सर्वैरुवास रघुनन्दनः ॥१६॥
तस्यां रात्र्यां व्यतीतायामभिषिच्य हुताग्निकान् । आपृच्छेतां नरव्याघ्रौ तापसान् वनगोचरान् ॥१७॥

Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the foremost of speakers, for his part beheld Sītā adorned as aforesaid and felt delighted with the gift of love made by the hermitess. (13) Sītā, the princess of Mithila, then related to Srī Rāma all about the loving gift made by the hermitess of a garment, ornaments and garland. (14) Śrī Rāma, for his part, as well as Lakṣmaṇa, the great car-warrior, felt highly rejoiced to see the reception of Sītā (the princess of Mithila), which was extremely rare among human beings. (15) Beholding Sītā (whose countenance shone like the moon) consecrated (by the sacred gift of the holy lady), the celebrated Śrī Rāma (the delight of the Raghus) who was received with honour by the hermits, then spent the night with all. (16) Having finished their ablutions when that night had fully expired, Śrī Rama and Lakṣmaṇa (who were tigers among men) took leave of the ascetics dwelling in the forest, who had (just) offered oblations into the sacred fire. (17)

तावूचुस्ते वनचरास्तापसा धर्मचारिणः । वनस्य तस्य संचारं राक्षसैः समभिप्लुतम् ॥१८॥
रक्षांसि पुरुषादानि नानारूपाणि राघव । वसन्त्यस्मिन् महारण्ये व्यालाश्च रुधिराशनाः ॥१९॥
उच्छिष्टं वा प्रमत्तं वा तापसं ब्रह्मचारिणम् । अदन्त्यस्मिन् महारण्ये तान् निवारय राघव ॥२०॥
एष पन्था महर्षीणां फलान्याहरतां वने । अनेन तु वनं दुर्गं गन्तुं राघव ते क्षमम् ॥२१॥
इतीरितः प्राञ्जलिभिस्तपस्विभिर्द्विजैः कृतस्वस्त्ययनः परंतपः ।
वनं सभार्यः प्रविवेश राघवः सलक्ष्मणः सूर्य इवाभ्रमण्डलम् ॥२२॥

इत्यार्षे श्रीमद्रामायणे वाल्मीकीये आदिकाव्येऽयोध्याकाण्डे एकोनविंशत्यधिकशततमः सर्गः ॥ ११९ ॥

The aforesaid ascetics dwelling in the forest and practising virtue (there) told the two princes about the region of that forest infested by ogres. (18) "Ogres feeding upon the human flesh and appearing in various guises, as well as blood-sucking beasts of prey live in this great forest, O scion of Raghu ! (19) They devour an ascetic or celibate who has not rinsed his mouth after partaking of some solid or liquid food or who is delinquent in this great forest; (pray) ward them off, O scion of Raghu ! (20) This is the path followed by eminent Ṛṣis gathering fruits in the forest. It would be advisable for you to make to the forest, which is difficult of access, by this path alone." (21) Spoken to as above by the ascetics with joined palms (as a gesture of supplication), Śrī Rāma (a scion of Raghu), the scorcher of his foes, when he had been presented by the Brahmans with flowers etc. accompanied by good wishes and benedictions, made his way into the heart of the forest along with his consort and Lakṣmaṇa, as the sun would penetrate a mass of clouds. (22)

Thus ends Canto One hundred and nineteen in the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the glorious Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, the work of a Ṛṣi and the oldest epic.

THE END OF AYODHYĀ-KĀṆḌA

G.P. 016

II Shri Hari II

GITA PRESS, GORAKHPUR

Publications, Kalyan and Kalyana-Kalpataru available at :

Gita Press, Gorakhpur—273005 (India), Fax (0551) 336997; Phone (0551) 334721

Branches

Calcutta
PIN-700007
Govind-Bhavan-Karyalaya
151, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
✆ (033) 2386894, 2380251

Delhi
PIN-110006
Gita Press, Gorakhpur Ki Pustak-Dukan,
2609, Nayi Sarak, ✆ (011) 3269678

Patna
PIN-800004
Gita Press, Gorakhpur Ki Pustak-Dukan,
Ashok Rajpath, ✆ (0612) 662379

Kanpur
PIN-208001
Gita Press, Gorakhpur Ki Pustak-Dukan,
24/55, Birhana Road, ✆(0512) 352351

Varanasi
PIN-221001
Gita Press, Gorakhpur Ki Pustak-Dukan,
59/9, Nichibag, ✆ (0542) 353551

Haridwar
PIN-249401
Gita Press, Gorakhpur Ki Pustak-Dukan,
Sabjimandi, Motibazar, ✆ (0133) 422657

Rishikesh
PIN-249304
Gita-Bhavan, P.O. Swargashram,
✆ (01364) 30122

* * *

Station-Stalls

1. Delhi Junction, Platform No. 1
2. New Delhi, Platform No. 8-9
3. I.S.B.T. (Delhi)
4. Hazarat Nizamuddin (Delhi), Platform No. 4-5
5. Kota (Rajasthan), Platform No. 1
6. Kanpur, Platform No.1
7. Gorakhpur, Platform No. 1
8. Varanasi, Platform No. 3
9. Haridwar, Platform No. 1
10. Patna, Book-Trolly, Platform No. 1
11. Howrah, New Complex, Platform No. 18
12. Mughal Saraya Junction, Platform No. 3-4
13. Lucknow (N. E. Railway)
14. Secunderabad, Platform No. 1
15. Sealdah Main, Platform No. 8

* * *

Authorised dealers

1. Shri Gita Press-Pustak-Prachar-Kendra, ✆ (0141) 563379
   'Bulian Building', Jauhari Bazar, Jaipur-302003, ✆ (0141) 5[illegible]3379

2. *For English and Regional languages Publications :—*
   Gopal Seva Trust, 82 Krishna Talkies Road, Erode—638003, ✆ (0424) 213976

* * *